VISIT…

THE DANCE
OF THE MUSES

Choral Theory and Ancient Greek Poetics

A. P. DAVID

OXFORD

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Choral Theory and
Ancient Greek Poetics

A. P. DAVID

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for David Grene and Arthur W. H. Adkins

The odds is gone
And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon

Preface

It is sixteen years since I first wrote up the new theory of the Greek accent, and twelve since I wrote a chapter on the connection between the modern Greek συρτός and the epic hexameter. Thanks to Oxford University Press, the time has at last come for these discoveries to be presented to the public and the professional worlds. There have always been reviewers who recognized the merits. But there have also been reviewers who were willing to say, 'he can't say that'. There is not such a Copernican shift in my argument as the latter scholars fear. Many people are now talking about 'performance'. It is time for Hellenists, students, and teachers alike, to stop talking awhile, and to *try it.*

For that life as a graduate student, thank you to Elizabeth Adkins, my guardian angel; to Paul Friedrich, my champion; and to Gregory Nagy, my rescuer.

Thank you for detailed and pointed comments: Andrew Barker, Stephen Daitz, Armand D'Angour, Chris Faraone, Noam Gedalof, Eric Hamp, Stanley Lombardo and his graduate seminar (Anne Rabe, Eura Ryan, Robert Weinstein), Jack Melsheimer, Stephanie Nelson, Mark O'Connor, John Paulas, Miriam Rother, Brian Satterfield, Stephen Scully; and especially Arthur Adkins, Anne David, Paul Friedrich, David Grene, Katherine Kretler, Katia Mitova, and Elliott Zuckerman. Thank you very much also to my anonymous reviewers at other presses.

Thank you to all who read and advised and inspired—professionals, family, friends, teachers, grad students, college students, χορευταί— and to the first students of this theory; thank you: Matthew Adkins, Maya Alapin, Donald Allen, Joe Alulis, George Anastaplo, Keri Ames, Guy Amirthanayagam, Indran Amirthanayagam, Caroline Barry, Denea Bertles, Allan Bloom, Eva Brann, Todd Breyfogle, Anna Brown, Kimberly Bryan, Samantha Buker, Erin Callahan, Martha Connor, Wendy Doniger, Robert Druecker, Emilia Emini, Alison Fraser, Andy Freda, Katrin Finck, Sarah Frost, Miriam Rheingold Fuller, Stephen Gabel, Jordan Gannon, Erikk Geannikis, Adam Gies,

I bow to my parents: my late father, Guy Amirthanayagam, poet, critic, and wonderful fellow, and my mother Elizabeth Indrani, for their love and prayers. My dear mother's care in particular made the completion of this book possible. Special thanks to my autistic brother Revantha, who has been the source of all my study.

My deepest thanks belong to Anne, and to our children Guenevere Adimanthi and Rosalind Kanmani. My partner for twenty-two years, Anne combed and carded earlier versions of the manuscript as well as could be managed, and helped revise it at crucial points. May many blessings accrue to her for this, for her exceptional insight as a linguist, and for her love. I suppose it must be that all things pass, but I shall be ever grateful for our past together and for our teachers.

To David Grene and Arthur Adkins: thank you for making a man of me. As I live and breathe and walk the earth, I shall honour thee. Μάλιστα δέ τ᾽ ἔκλυον αὐτοί.

APD

Rockville, Maryland
July 2005

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Introduction: The Right Comparison

This book is about the origins and hence the nature of ancient Greek poetry. Most especially it is about Homer's poetry. Strange to say, there are some fundamental things that have yet to be said about these matters. This book also offers students a new way to read Greek aloud, based on a new interpretation of the accent marks that have descended to us in ancient texts. While one is obliged to be technical and evidentiary if one is to be persuasive about ancient poetry and ancient languages, let me say at the beginning that the reader who comes away from these pages with the tools and the desire to *perform* ancient Greek verse, will be the one who most happily fulfils their purpose. Only from new performance can genuinely new insight into performance-based texts, or 'scores', come to light; and only from this new insight might a criticism emerge that can break free of the bipolar eristics that are the legacy of the modern critical landscape, by returning us to something both original and intrinsic to the texts themselves of the ancient poets—those dead masters of a living dance.

The germ of this study lay in a graduate student's pursuit of the meaning of W. Sidney Allen's groundbreaking account of stress in ancient Greek. Allen's medium of discovery was ancient Greek poetry: specifically the phenomenon of 'agreement' at the ends of lines of stichic verse. In one direction, Allen's theory of word-level stress leads us to a new theory of the tonic Greek accent, a prize for the comparative linguist and for the student of ancient texts in verse and prose. In another, the phenomenon of agreement, between metrical ictus and word-level accent, leads us via a historical sourcing of this ictus, not, as in English, in an automatic linguistic pattern of prosodic alternation,

but in the documented extra-linguistic phenomenon of dance, to the synthetic notion of *choreia* (χορεία). Analysed by Plato into its elements of 'rhythm' and 'harmony', χορεία becomes a rubric under which to contextualize and exploit the new theory of the accent. Accent corresponds to harmony and ictus to rhythm. We shall see that χορεία is a concept that opens new approaches, radically new and yet radically authentic, into the poetics of ancient poetry.

The structure of Greek metre will no longer be an abstract 'given' in attempts to expose and interpret ancient poetry, but an object of investigation intertwined with the pursuit of verbal meaning. The characteristic divisions in the hexameter, for example, are no longer a template that one ascribes to 'tradition': my theory predicts both kinds of caesura in the dactylic hexameter, on the basis of the prosodic profile of Greek, and the finite number of ways that a dactylic thesis can be harmonically emphasized in relation to the arsis. No such level of accounting has previously been possible. Metricians have attempted to analyse Greek poetry without a theory of where to stress the words. It has been assumed without argument that word-endings must have been the most salient prosodic feature in this poetry, despite the knowledge that Greek did not automatically accent either an initial or a final syllable. It can only be the length of these merely academic traditions that now blinds scholars and students alike to the implausibility of such a method and its assumptions. The new theory of the Greek accent, when applied to Homer's verses, discloses for the first time the dynamic pattern that produces a caesura in the third foot, as well as a harmonic cadence in the sixth. When applied to lyric, it finds there as well a clear and remarkable pattern of disagreement moving towards agreement between accent and ictus.

This key element of my study, a new theory of the ancient Greek accent, is grounded in the method of comparative reconstruction. The comparative work of Allen in Vedic and Greek is the basis of this study; we shall identify strong and new implications also for Latin and classical Sanskrit. Much of my own contribution has to do with the reading of ancient testimony, and with typological comparison. But my conclusions tend to problematize the definite reconstructive claims that can and have been made, in particular claims that link the Indo-European accent to the 'free' and purely tonal accent of Vedic, leaving ablaut unexplained in IE, and to problematize also

the descent of those languages which seem to have developed a culminative accent with a stress function, as exhibited in metrical environments, but for whom ablaut had become historical. I hope that this sort of problematizing can be seen as a contribution, in the sense of helping lay the table for a solution.

In developing a new theory of the accent, and in connecting Greek poetry to its origins in dance, this study performs what is in essence a historical restoration. But I shall be led to make claims that cannot but be thought to seem grandiose and revolutionary, in light of several hundred years of modern Homeric studies, and a tradition of interpreting Greek metrics that extends two thousand years. (This is the tradition, uniquely among all metrical analyses of the world's poetries, that has managed to proceed without taking the role of verbal accent into account.) It would be well, therefore, to be as careful as possible at the outset in recognizing and articulating any principles that undergird the work of historical restoration. Where direct testimony cannot guide the hand, there must be a resort to comparison; and there are at least two kinds of comparison that this work depends upon. One involves the formal linguistic method that leads to a reconstruction—where I shall be merely building on and interpreting the work of others. The other kind may be distinguished as 'typological' comparison—where for some reason my work proves to be more original—for all that it can often seem to be pointing out the obvious. The facts about the performative aspect of ancient verse have not been hidden; nor in exposing them do I use a secret code.

Classical scholarship proceeds, by and large, by comparisons. This is as true of grammar and the practice of ancient grammarians as it is of modern textual criticism. Studies in the humanities often now wear the garb of the 'comparative method'. One would be hard pressed to find a humanist work that did not drop the terms 'synchronic' and 'diachronic', however trivially or baselessly, as a kind of calling card of scholarly legitimacy. The source of this dressing in the case of professional classicists is likely to be modern anthropology, rather than its original theoretical development in diachronic linguistics. Few now question the application of the comparative method to culture, beyond its native ground of phonology, morphology, and syntax. There exists, due to Claude Levi-Strauss, a field of 'comparative mythology', complete with 'mythemes'. But there is

reason to wonder whether a lack of familiarity with the comparative method in its original mode can lead to a dilution of the theoretical framework of a study; and it was to find a theoretical framework in the humanities that anthropologists, classicists, and all manner of comparatists have mined linguistics, whose achievements, notwithstanding the natural sciences, are the great achievements in the liberal arts of the modern university.

'The sole means of reconstructing is by comparing, and the only aim of comparison is a reconstruction.'[1] So declared Ferdinand de Saussure. There appear in fact to be three interpretive options when one recognizes a parallelism in phenomena. The first is to say that the parallelism is a coincidence. This option can of course yield no matter for thought. The second is to say that one of the comparanda is derived from the other, through either borrowing or descent (i.e. either A → B or B → A). The problem here is that one has to establish a historical connection. Apart from certain more obvious cases of borrowing across languages, this generally requires knowledge of times and conditions external to the comparates themselves. In the case of ancient myths and languages, such knowledge must necessarily be scanty. The third option is the way of the diachronic linguist: to posit and to reconstruct a common original as shown schematically in Figure 1.1. Such an option depends upon an evaluation and a rejection of the other two for a particular case. Reconstruction is the way that yields both genuine theory and genuine history, in that the comparanda themselves supply all the data. The historical reality of Indo-European is not dependent on the establishing of times, places, peoples or conditions.

Consider, however, the title of M. L. West's influential study, *The East Face of Helicon: West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth*. The 'in' indicates a strong provenance claim: the second interpretive option rather than the third. West *is* able on occasion to draw on the possible borrowing of proper names, but he is also willing to 'cite' forms that are unattested in myth or anywhere else in the supposed language of origin (see his treatments of 'Siren' and 'Charybdis').[2]

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[1] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, tr. Baskin, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966, 218.

[2] M. L. West, *The East Face of Helicon: West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997, 428.

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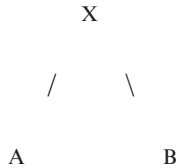
Figure 1.1

The argument often appears to be structural, however. In his section on similes West concludes,

[Homer's] mechanisms for launching a story and carrying it forward, his deployment of messengers, his use and portrayal of dreams, his ways of exploiting speech as a structural element, his accounts of feasting and other genre scenes, numerous typical motifs of his battle narratives, his whole treatment of the gods—all of these show, in outline and in detail, so many similarities with Near Eastern poetry that we are bound to infer an intimate historical connection. At some period (or periods) in the course of its pre-Homeric development, the tradition of Greek epic had flowed along with a wider East Mediterranean tradition, and had been influenced by it, not casually or just at occasional points, but profoundly and pervasively.[3]

The notion of 'an intimate historical connection' and the river metaphor are too vague to require a cross-examination or a defence. (There is no telling what is meant here concretely by 'the tradition of Greek epic'.) The described correspondences, however, might well have formed the basis of a diachronic reconstruction of a prototype, or archetype, of form and content in the storytelling of contiguous peoples. But West is occasionally explicit about the simpler historical inference he wishes to draw:

We can hardly avoid the assumption that the overpopulation motif used in the *Cypria* … has its source in Babylonian epic. It is true that a similar myth is found in Indian epic: it is related that the earth once complained to Brahmā of the ever-increasing weight of mankind, and Brahmā created death to alleviate the problem. But it would be very rash to infer from the coincidence between the Indian myth and the *Cypria* that some ancient

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[3] Ibid. 219.

Indo-European tradition lay behind both passages. The motif appears only in a late phase of the Greek epic tradition, and at an even later date in India. It is attested over a thousand years earlier in Mesopotamia, and as it is certain that Mesopotamian influence extended eastwards to India as well as westwards to Greece, we must conclude that this is an example of it.[4]

West's use of 'coincidence' extends only to the Indian and the Greek, but for some reason not to the Mesopotamian exemplar; and he gives no good reason why one should choose a provenance claim over a reconstruction. Apart from the rather obvious fact that in the case of once oral traditions, a date of attestation need have no relation to a date of origin, his argument reminds one of the kind of mistake made by early Indo-Europeanists in relation to Sanskrit:

In the earliest stages of Indo-European linguistics scholars understood neither the real purpose of comparison nor the importance of the reconstructive method … That explains one of their grossest mistakes: the exaggerated and almost exclusive role that they gave to Sanskrit. Because it was the oldest document of Proto-Indo-European, they promoted Sanskrit to the rank of prototype.[5]

Saussure goes on:

In a specific case … where one idiom has definitely developed from the other and where both are equally well known, we should of course reckon only with the earlier idiom. But unless both conditions are met, priority in time has no importance. Thus Lithuanian, which is attested only since 1540, is no less valuable than Old Slavic, which was recorded in the tenth century, or than the Sanskrit of the Rig Veda for that matter.[6]

Given an assumption that there were periods of orality in the three traditions cited for an 'overpopulation motif', it would seem that West's assertion of a Mesopotamian provenance, a claim based in part on the age of the attestation, is in fact the most rash of the possible inferences. (In a case like this, one must not even discount mere coincidence.)

Diachronic reconstruction requires the establishment of elementary units. In order to do this, linguists must first isolate those

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[4] Ibid. 482.
[5] Le Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, 215.
[6] Ibid. 216.

features and bundles of features that constitute the objects of the science and the spatio-temporal particulars of the history. This does not mean that phonemes or morphemes are easy to define; neither are they entirely cognitive phenomena nor are they entirely phonetic. Yet they are, all the same, real and definite, el-em-ents in the root sense: the a-b-c's have been paradigms of intelligibility and transtemporal identity since the invention of alphabets. (The title of Euclid's famous book, for example, could be translated 'Letters'.) One cannot expect the same kind of clarity or substance in historical genre distinctions, such as 'mechanism of launch', 'deployment of messengers', and 'battle narrative'; or in motifs or 'mythemes'.

Saussure's declaration is overstated, however. There is the obvious possibility of 'typological' comparison that does not lead to reconstruction. Such synchronic, or achronic comparison—comparison simply—may well involve construction but not necessarily reconstruction. Perhaps the very nature of comparison requires that there be some third thing, a construct, which mediates the particular comparanda, and to which they variously relate. *Is* there such a third thing involved—a τύπος—in the comprehension of the two parts of a simile, for example? We shall answer in the affirmative; but on hypothesis, and merely for clarity's sake. Such a third thing would be a 'type', but not a 'proto-' or 'archetype'. Some scholars (like Wendy Doniger[7]) are able to illuminate by comparison, without treading the water of provenance claims, or falsely mimicking the rigour of reconstruction.

Modern American Homer studies have been dominated for several generations by a single such simple comparison and its attendant typological claim. From a comparison between perceived peculiarities of Homeric verse and certain features of modern south Slavic oral poetry, and the claim that the comparanda were actually similar, Milman Parry drew the inference that Homeric verse was itself orally composed. What we are dealing with in oral theory is therefore both the typological claim, which can obviously be doubted; and the related inference, which is reminiscent of a typical

[7] See e.g. her discussion of 'Diffusion and Survival' in Wendy Doniger, *The Implied Spider: Politics and Theology in Myth*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1998, 139–45.

Socratic deception—substituting the cause of one compared item for the cause of another.

My own study also makes a typological claim. Since I shall be comparing Homer to a kind of phenomenon very different from the one that Parry did, it has necessarily to be a counter-claim, as well as a positive claim for a new type or paradigm with which to interpret the peculiarities of Homeric verse. Friends of my argument in its earlier forms have wondered why I need to 'take on' Parry. Should not an argument stand on its own, without having to be perceived to demolish anything else, in particular a theory that has become a classroom tradition with powerful adherents? It is possible to be so seduced by the elegance of the mechanism in Parry's theory as to forget or otherwise fail to consider its simple comparatist foundation. At this level, Parry's theory is in no sense falsifiable. The only possible argument against a particular comparison is a better one, and judgement in such matters is only partially apodeictic. In particular, prejudice against a paradigm shift is inevitable when an elegant, long-standing and widely-taught theory has been foisted upon the currently accepted paradigm. But when two different comparisons are drawn in order to explain the very same phenomena—such as repetitions and noun-and-epithet phrases—a judgement has to be made. What I shall have to insist on in this typological component of my study is that for Homer, at long last, we make the *right* comparison.

It is impossible here not to be straightforward and blunt. Children know that one cannot compare apples and oranges. There must be a correspondence between essential elements of the things compared before a connection with generative or historical implications can be inferred. Apples and oranges are both fruit but they are not both citrus fruit. Homeric poetry and south Slavic oral poetry are both poetry. But there is an integral element in the origin, form, and composition of Homeric poetry that is not present in south Slavic oral poetry, nor indeed in any of the proposed comparates in so-called 'oral literature' or elsewhere. This element is dance.

The most obvious evidence that Homeric poetry originated in dance is in its metre, and in particular, the specific way in which the ancients described the elements of metre. The components of a hexameter line, or a lyric period, are, literally, 'feet', or steps whose

rhythm can be properly actualized by the movement of human legs. The distinctive isochrony of the dactyl itself—the time equality of the strong and weak elements of the foot, as against the typically contrastive pulses of speech rhythms—as well as the isometry of hexameter lines, together recall the isometry and isochrony of dance patterns.

There is also direct evidence from Homer: the bards in the *Odyssey*, including Phemius and Demodocus, are at times depicted as singing their tales while others danced (1.150–5, 8.256 ff.; see also 4.17–19). The mere fact of this possibility in performance must distinguish Homeric epic formally from other claimants to the 'epic' title in stichic narrative, and hence delimit its field of comparison. In the case of Demodocus, the performance depicted is no impromptu affair, but a carefully prepared event, supervised by nine officious judges, who smooth out a suitable circle. Demodocus is placed at the centre of this dancing space, then surrounded by boys who take their stand in a circle. The boys are said to be skilled (δαήμονες) at the dance. Hence they are not casual improvisers, responding to the singer's rhythm; rather, the dance comes first in this depiction, before the song begins, and appears to continue through the song. (Many aspects of the depiction of performance in Phaeacia, culminating in the books-long lyre-less declamation of Odysseus himself, suggest the synchronic representation of a diachronic development in the means and structure of epic performance.) That the dance supplied a rhythm—a backbeat—to the singer is an obvious inference. But in the course of our study we shall find the influence of the form and the rhythm of the round dance to be pervasive in Homer, at the level of the syllable; at the level of the word and phrase; at the level of the line; at the level of the narrative, in 'ring composition'; and in some of the deepest structures in Homer's narrative form.

If we want to make the right comparison, we must compare Homer's text not solely on the basis of its composition out of words, or even in stichic metre; rather we must look for texts made up of a combination of word, rhythm, and harmony, and what is more, and crucially, a combination that is known to have been generated by accompanying a specific dance. The compositions of modern classical music, arising as they do out of dance, therefore present themselves as legitimate comparanda. A great deal of ink has been

spilt on the question of textuality in the context of a supposed
Homeric orality; but there has been scant consideration of the
musical text, or 'score', as a paradigm with which to discuss such
Homeric issues as performance, compositional form, and literacy in
performer and audience.

I know of no record that the opening chorus of J. S. Bach's *St
Matthew Passion* has ever been danced to. It is highly unlikely that it
was intended to be danced. And yet the chorus is manifestly a
siciliano. Not every composition in 12/8 is a *siciliano*. But there is a
characteristic movement to this dance that is configured spatially and
in human gesture and posture beyond the instruction given by the
mere time signature, and the speech and the music of the opening
chorus of the *Passion* sensibly *dance* with the dance. Similarly, the
texts of Homeric arioso are musical texts, and we shall see that they
also 'dance' to a peculiar dance, most obviously in their rhythmic
articulation, but also in their diction and their narrative shape. In
this sense, Virgil shares only a time signature with Homer. It is
possible to dance to either of them, in particular as Virgil observes
caesura and diaeresis, but in Homer's case, recurrent phrases match-
ing the lengths of the dance's articulations, together with his narra-
tive rings, will be seen to connect his music to the form, fine
structure, and 'groove' of a particular round dance native to
Greece—just as the motion and phrasing of Bach's chorus bespeak
a sublimated and yet altogether actual *siciliano*. I know of no record
of a text of Homer having been danced before February 2001,[8] and
there is no reason to suspect that Homer himself, any more than
Bach, intended his music to be danced; but there is overwhelming
evidence all the same that Homer's poetry was, unlike Virgil's, and
unequivocally, *dance music*.

It is true that the historical evidence (as opposed to the epic
depictions) suggest a performer of Homeric poetry who was accom-
panied neither by the lyre nor a circle of dancers, and who wielded
a staff—the so-called 'rhapsode'. One reading of the sequence of
performances in Phaeacia would imply that Homer was aware of this

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[8] At the first of the workshops entitled Χορεία Μουσῶν, directed by Miriam
Rother and the author, at St John's College, Annapolis.

development. What allows us to connect even rhapsodic perform-
ance to an origin in dance, just as we connect a seated modern
'orchestra' to such an origin, are precisely those celebrated peculiar-
ities of the Homeric score, recurrent noun-and-epithet phrases
shaped by caesura and diaeresis. A connection to the ethos of a
peculiar dance will be seen to account for these textual peculiarities,
at whatever stage (pre- or post-rhapsodic) the Homeric texts may
actually have been produced. In particular, the noun-and-epithet
phrases disappear historically when the hexameter becomes *merely*
a rhythm of declamation (as in Apollonius and Virgil), without a
tradition of either lyric or rhapsodic performance. Meanwhile, the
direct testimony of Platonic and Aristotelian texts demonstrates that
the nature of this peculiar dance was well known, and hence a direct
object for an audience, hundreds of years into the post-Homeric
millennium of the rhapsodes.

It is indeed remarkable that even those scholars who have come to
take an interest in the performance of Homer appear not to have
recognized the significance of dance in either their analyses or their
comparisons. Consider this dismissal:

Where can we turn, within Homer, to find performance? Not, I believe, to
the poets. Most of what can be said about the significance of Demodokos
and Phemios, the so-called bards, and Odysseus, bard manqué, has been said
by now, some of it thoughtfully. This path has been a useful dead end; it has
been worth it if only because we have learned to reread the *Odyssey* as a
narratological labyrinth. I cannot see that it has any impact on *Iliad* studies.
Ultimately, the evidence is too thin for us to draw conclusions about Homer
from his depiction of bards.[9]

But the evidence is not yet in. Or rather, it seems to have been
strangely ignored. It is not enough to look at Homeric speech—
diction and formulations—to consider Homeric performance. Hom-
eric speech is *metrical* speech. But it is not even enough to look at
other metrical speech, south Slavic or otherwise, to find an elucidat-
ing comparison for Homer. Some metres—including those based on
the dactyl, and all the other Greek 'feet'—were by-products of dance.
Others that have been used in the world's compositions, oral and

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[9] Richard P. Martin, *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad*,
Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989, 9–10.

literate, were *not*. In a sung text whose rhythm is manifestly derived
from a formal dance, we find the right comparison.

Let us be clear, however, that a claim about the *right comparison*
does not entail a claim about the *similarity of the comparates*. Lemons
and oranges are both citrus, and so to be distinguished from all the
varieties of apples, as oral poetry from oratorio. But in comparing
lemons and oranges one may well find that one kind is sour and the
other sweet; and hence not something merely different from, but
opposite to the other. In comparing Homeric poetry to species of
modern classical music, one must still and always distinguish geno-
type and phenotype. A surprising number of people confuse whales
for fish, presumably because they have comparable phenotypes; and
the medium of metrical narratives with repetitions has also led many
to relate Homeric and south Slavic epic. But if one is seeking an
account of nature and origin, comparative reconstruction of species
demands that the proper comparates of the mammalian whale are
the lowly mouse and the land-lubbing elephant.

To establish that Homer's poetry is a kind of dance music would of
course be an important result in itself, but it is apparent that dance
and dance music need have no verbal component at all (just as there
is no intrinsic necessity for there to be sea-going mammals). Our
genetic claim serves here to open a door to the question of the
pressure of such a medium of origin upon the forms and structures
of language that partake of it in Homeric epic, under such widely
non-musical rubrics as narrative, phrasing, and morphology. Under
a number of these headings, repetition is the most obvious as well as
the deepest issue. To avoid the sophistic deception, inferring com-
mon causes from faulty comparisons, we must in one dissertive act
affirm both the true cause and the right comparison. Is there repe-
tition in Homer because of the requirements of oral composition-in-
performance? Or is there repetition in Homer because Homer's
poetry is, in some essential sense, music?

Parry's comparison led to an interpretation of repeated phrases
and lines in Homer as oral 'formulas', metrical 'building blocks' with
which a bard filled and improvised his lines. Zeal for the comparative
reconstructive method, rather than facts, led to the positing of
'cognate formulae', and to a number of versions of 'comparative
metrics'. Gregory Nagy, for example, following Kuhn, described the

Greek poetic collocation κλέος ἄφθιτον as 'cognate' with Vedic *sravas aksitam.* Unfortunately, however, the collocation *sravas aksitam* never actually occurs as such. (Nagy, amusingly, describes the some-what proximate appearance of these words in a text as an appearance of the formula in 'tmesis'.[10]) The question of what in fact constitutes an isolable unit in such reconstructive studies, whether metrical or formulaic, remains highly dubious. Where there is no definable 'metreme', and where the dimensions and the function of a 'formula' remain the province of dispute and arbitrary assertion, claims for cognate metres and cognate formulae, and in general the application of comparative reconstruction, are philosophically and methodologically groundless.

Where the facts of the case have forced most Homerists to renounce, or, as they say, 'soften' their position on Parry's notion of 'economy', Nagy has taken refuge in the notion of a traditional theme as the 'prime regulator of Homeric epithet in particular and formula in general'.[11] It is unclear, however, what the notion 'traditional' is supposed to add to the notion of 'theme', in particular if it cannot be established that each theme is tied to a particular and unique formula—that is to say, if it has been shown that the principle of economy does not apply to Homer. Synonymous formulae would bespeak innovation—perhaps a tradition of innovation! Nagy refers to 'the diachronic hierarchy of theme (in the sense of a "traditional unit of composition on the level of meaning") over formula (in the sense of "a traditional unit of composition on the level of wording") over meter (in the sense of "a traditional unit of composition on the level of rhythm")'.[12] Just what is this word 'traditional' *doing* here all over the place? We have enough to chew on in considering a hierarchy of theme over formula and rhythm. Such a hierarchy is by no means self-evident. It is presumptuous to suppose that rhythmic effects in poetry and music do not take the lead in the disclosure of affect and

[10] Gregory Nagy, *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974, 157.

[11] For some of my references I am indebted to Brian Satterfield (junior fellow in Social Thought, University of Chicago) and his incendiary dissertation chapter on the Homeric Problem (personal communication, 2003).

[12] Gregory Nagy, *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990, 4.

meaning. How the notion of tradition factors into things is quite obscure, and the warrant with which it is applied is nowhere given.

Also without warrant is Nagy's use of the synchronic/diachronic distinction. One way to get at this distinction is to consider the difference between definition and etymology in the sphere of semantics. In definition, we get at meaning by means of contrasts within a synchronous system of usage among speakers. In etymology, meaning is 'dug up' by researching the historical development of a particular word and its root. In Saussure's image, one is looking at horizontal and vertical cross-sections of a tree trunk. But the distinction does not apply properly and without ambiguity to semantics. Definition vs. etymology is a useful way to learn the distinction; but the proper sphere of Saussure's distinction is comparative reconstruction in phonology, where the rigorous discernment of systematic correspondences among linguistic forms leads to the inferring of certain 'proto-forms' from which the compared forms are presumed to have evolved. The use of the distinction appears to sophisticate Nagy's treatment of tradition, but it turns out to be a sophistical use.

The key thing to note in relation to Nagy's application is that diachronic reconstruction requires the establishment of elementary units, as we have noted. Consider Nagy's hierarchy: once we have scrubbed our minds of the notion 'traditional', we are left with 'theme' as a unit of composition on the level of meaning, 'formula' as a unit of composition on the level of wording, and 'metre' as a unit of composition on the level of rhythm. What are these units? Can one even begin to define them? And without such definition, can one even begin to make sense of their changing over time according to rules—that is to say, of diachronic accounts with respect to them?

My own typological claim obliges us to consider anew, and radically, the ontology of the metrical building block—that is to say, the recurrent phrase—in Homer. This study develops a musical analysis of Homeric and ancient Greek lyric poetry as well, that will be seen to entail a thoroughgoing new approach to the poetics of ancient verse. Canons derived from both the ancient world and the modern—in particular, the poetics of 'oral theory' as it has been applied to Homer in the last century—come in for revision or rejection, in large part because they neglect the original context of ancient poetic performance in the χορεία Μουσῶν: the dance of the Muses.

The choral paradigm for Homer will be based on the most author-
itative of pre-Hellenistic sources and the most enduring of still extant
folk traditions. This paradigm explains what other hypotheses take as
merely given. Where 'choral theory' accounts for the origin of the
metre itself and the very feet, as well as the practical and aesthetic
motives for metrical phrasing and for recurrence, and most import-
antly and originally, for the caesurae and diaereses that appear to
constitute the internal structure of the hexameter line—oral theory
only explains repetition, and that as a functional necessity, born, it is
assumed, of the exigencies of a non-literary genesis. 'Formulae are
repetitions': in its origins, oral theory presumes to apologize for what
some modern *littérateurs* perceive in Homer as his 'characteristic
inconsistencies and inconcinnities'.[13] No ancient descriptions or
testimony can be cited; and typology is sought in modern oral
traditions without any apparent connection to dance.

In Plato and Aristotle we shall find direct testimony that epic verse
was bound up with a specific dance period of seventeen steps, which
they understood to break into subunits of nine and eight. When these
sub-periods are interpreted as sequences of dactyls, with theses and
arses, downbeats and upbeats, we may predict and shall discover a
system of prosodic cadences in Homer's verse, stressing the theses in
either masculine or feminine fashion around the third and sixth foot.
The analysis is supplemented by the evidence of a surviving dactylic
round dance in modern Greece, which calls attention to a break and
reversal in impetus corresponding to the location of the trochaic
caesura (which is usually emphasized by a feminine prosodic cadence),
and also to a resumptive impetus in the fifth foot, corresponding to the
bucolic diaeresis.

This diaeresis presents a puzzle that has heretofore been over-
looked in its musical dimension. Why this extra division? Linguistic
theories of metre can account for a break near mid-line as a kind of
spontaneity, based on instincts for symmetry and the like. Hence
some kind of mid-line division in the hexameter, whether caesura or
diaeresis, is already predictable typologically. But diaeresis marks the
beginning of a line, and hence constitutes an inceptive cue. How can

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[13] David M. Shive, *Naming Achilles*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1987,
preface and p. 3.

one account for the regularization of a new beginning, a kind of 'kick start'—the bucolic diaeresis—immediately before the *end* of the hexameter line? (The standard introductions and accounts do not seem to feel even the pressure of a problem here: accounts of the diaeresis as a so-called 'rhythmic clausula' do not even pretend to address the question of why such a strange effect might have been a poetic desideratum.) In the modern folk dance (the συρτός of ancient name), it so happens that the locations of these classical divisions of the line, caesura and diaeresis, frame a distinctive retrogression and then a resumption in the circling step. They mark the 'tropic' points of a dance that revolves with involutions.

The proposed musical analysis for Greek verse departs from the abstract metrics of the past in that it conceives the rhythmic and harmonic elements of poetry as integral to the whole expression, and decisive in the interpretation of its meaning. In the light of modern classical traditions the method of analysis may seem suspect in its novelty, but it is grounded in Allen's unimpeachable work on ancient prosody, and in the most authoritative of pre-Hellenistic sources. It serves at last to bring the interpretation of ancient verse into step with the sorts of analyses customarily enjoyed by works in all the more recent poetical and musical traditions.

Such an approach is now possible for the first time because of the new theory of the Greek tonic accent set out in Chapter 3, and its application to Greek poetry understood as χορεία. Χορεία is the proper name for the art and the work of the ancient Hellenic poets, described by Plato as a synthesis of dance rhythm and vocal harmony, in disagreement moving towards agreement. Chapter 2 introduces a poetics of χορεία. Choral theory finds its grounds in the later Plato. To be sure, the modern interest in issues of composition and performance can seem excessive at times, almost an attempt to avoid the question of poetic meaning. And yet, poetry is 'making', first of all, and a sense of the form and the dynamic in the art of composition must inform the larger criticism and interpretation. In particular, the argument is concerned to expose the choral (rather than oral) nature of Homer's poetry.

We proceed in the middle chapters (4 through 7) to a treatment of Homeric poetics—in this area the approach may be said to be approaching maturity—beginning literally from the ground up in

the rhythm of feet, and demonstrating the genesis of the peculiar verbal characteristics of hexameter poetry from the peculiarities of a native dance. Chapter 4 applies the new theory of the accent to show for the first time that the aesthetic desiderata associated with this dance are answered by patterns of prosodic placement in the verse. Central to the poetics that emerges is a coming to see the so-called 'traditional' phrases, noun-and-epithet 'formulas', in their true potency as 'choral signifiers' (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 considers the influence of this dance upon theme and narrative and the higher levels of Homer's art. There follows a brief synthesis of these results, in the form of a 'natural history' of the origin of Homeric verse from catalogue poetry. And in the final chapter I offer a foretaste of the fruits to be harvested in lyric from a choral analysis, where the harmony revealed by the new theory of the accent consummates an expectant but undetermined metrical pattern generated by the feet.

Metrical or rhythmic analysis by and large has been divorced from the interpretation of the meaning of an ancient poem. It is often treated as a footnote or appendix to criticism. (George Thomson's *Greek Lyric Metre*, William C. Scott's *Musical Design in Aeschylean Theater*, and Paolo Vivante's *Homeric Rhythm* represent notable exceptions.) Conversely, the analysis of meaning has largely been lexical, and considerable genius and effort of inference has been spent on the subtleties of usage and thematic context. Although the practice of scansion depends upon a more-or-less genuine sequence of syllables, and upon authoritative metrical knowledge, it nevertheless gives no stylistic insight into the actual sound-substance of Greek poetry. There can be no such insight while the native prosody or stress pattern remains a mystery. Only consider what scansion of Shakespeare would produce—'To bé or nót to bé, that ís the quéstion'—and compare the most amateurish of actor's renderings, where *both* lexical accent and metrical ictus come into play. Classical scholars are not shy about commenting on style, in poetry or prose; yet no one would listen to a critic of Shakespeare who could not recite Shakespeare's English or had not witnessed a performance.

What has been missing between the metrical and the lexical is the harmonic: ἁρμονία, the artful 'joining' of significant word to rhythmic foot. Knowledge of the harmonic stress points native to the words discloses a music, through the interplay of harmonic accent

and metrical ictus in counterpoint and reinforcement, and so turns the text of an ancient poem into a musical score. What cannot be promised here is the definitive reconstruction of a performance. Definitive performance in relation to any written text, even in the contemporary, must remain an inherently doubtful proposition. Even the living presence of an author or composer cannot protect a written work from its dependence upon the act of interpretation in performance.

What *can* be promised here, however, is a new level of objective insight into the poetics of ancient poetry. In modern musical texts, rhythmic modulations, key changes, melodic patterns, and the like, constitute a body of objective data yielded immediately in the interpretation of a musical score. Similarly, the stress patterns of a Shakespearean soliloquy are largely a matter of objective record, where a linguistic inheritance is supplemented by linguistic scholarship. These stress patterns in a speech form the objective component in the critical analysis of *emphasis*, a concept that bridges sound and meaning. The emphases are the 'significant stresses'. These data then in turn become the fodder for deeper or more idiosyncratic interpretation, in performer and critic alike. It has been thought heretofore that such data were unrecoverable from Greek choral poems. The dance and the dancers had vanished; and the accent marks, which indicate pitch contours, appeared to bear no patterned relation to the metrical scheme, as they always seem to do in living music and verse. Insight into emphasis had to come from scansion and word order alone; and while these are not insignificant components, and classicists proceed with interpretations of emphasis on these lines, it must be conceded that the root and original of broader emphasis in speech lie in phonological stress, or prosody. In poetry *and* prose, stress is the key to emphasis and style; and while a critic ignores or is ignorant of prosody, he must remain functionally deaf to both.

The new theory of the accent supplies the missing link: it claims to reveal the natural prosody of Greek speech, based on a new interpretation of the accent marks of the written tradition. When the most prosodically prominent syllables are identified according to the theory, and their positions then compared to the sequence of metrical ictus in a poem, a pattern is for the first time revealed which has

the unmistakable sense of music. The harmonic tie between word and foot is therefore established, without ever a dancer dancing or singer singing, directly from the written text.

The emergence of such a pattern is an important confirmation of a theory that is itself developed solely on historical and synchronic grounds. The Hellenic anomaly of a language whose prosody had appeared to have little or no relation to its poetry would be solved if the new theory is correct. On a practical level, it is hoped that the schema introduced here in Chapter 4, where the location and the quality of the prosodic prominences is overlaid on the quantitative sequence for passages in Homer, will prove to be an exportable prototype. Such analytic schemata can be expected to bring unexpected things to light. We shall later find, for example, a striking case of 'accentual rhyme' in Pindar's *Olympian* l. At the very least, harmonic analysis can begin to supplement the traditional methods of interpretation. (Indeed, while it is in its infancy, the harmonic analysis can only win credence by tending to corroborate the textual emphases pointed to by the traditional, 'lexical' criticism.) But it can fairly be hoped that harmonic analysis will one day be a guide to meaning, and become an essential element in a synthetic approach.

It is possible to separate the new theory of the accent from the rest of the argument of this book, as a purely linguistic thesis. But let the reader note that accent is produced by the voice, while in Greek, ictus comes from the feet. It is not necessary to dispute language-based theories of metre in general; only to claim an exception, grounded in historical evidence, but also in the observations of such scholars as Antoine Meillet and Pierre Chantraine, for Greek. Allen's study of stress depended on a presumed regularity of the accentual reinforcement of ictus in a metrical coda. The character of a coda as a metrical reality must therefore be given before any of his inferences can be made, about reinforcement of the ictus by linguistic stress. Hence his linguistic argument and discovery both depend upon, and remain blind to, the nature of a coda and the origin of its pattern of ictus.

In the course of this study, usually in the context of what is traditionally called 'anceps' in metrics, a 'two-headed' or doubtful position—including terminal anceps, a position in the metrical coda that Allen has to exclude in his survey—we shall even have reason to speak of the *accentual determination of ictus*; and elsewhere of the

possible *ictual determination of accent.* The two notions, linguistic accent and metrical ictus, will therefore be seen at times to be capable of determining each other mutually in Greek poetry. It then becomes theoretically imprudent in the case of Greek to formulate the notion of 'reinforcement' between accent and ictus in isolation of one from the other. This is why we must resurrect Plato's eyewitness synthetic notion of χορεία, even to make a purely linguistic claim, if we wish to ground such a claim properly. A full account of the phonological accent—if the source of our information for this feature across Greek is going to be the relation between ictus and accent in Greek poetry—must treat of them both together.

There is no reason any longer to be obliged to deal with ictus in metre merely as a linguistic given, when it is possible in the case of Greek to investigate it concretely, on its own terms, as an extralinguistic *phenomenon.* Greek metres are not dead scaffoldings upon which poetic words are hung as so many flapping tassels. Rather, the ictus produced by dancers (or dance rhythms) is only a partially realized matrix, which can be variously informed, as in modern classical music, by the harmonic determinants that both generate and consummate a musical pattern.

As a matter of convenience and clarity, in what follows I shall consistently refer to the rhythmic distinction commonly described by 'rising' and 'falling', as between, say, runs of anapaests and runs of dactyls, with the alternative 'ascending' and 'descending'. 'Rising' and 'falling' will always refer to pitch contour. In this way, a rising *pitch* or *stress*, on the longum of a dactyl, can implement a descending *rhythm.*

Metrical analysis has given us mere quantity and mechanical ictus. To the extent that critical schemata have abstracted and mathematized the quantities into formulae, as in the prevailing representations of dactylo-epitrite metres, for example, even the actual pattern of ictus has been put aside in the description. But when we can write the positions of the lexical accents into our metrical charts, and demonstrate their relation to the strong parts of the feet (that is, to the ictus), we have, in effect, introduced bar lines into the score. Genuine rhythm can be read from the text. And to the extent that we can identify the quality of the accents in their direction of pitch, we have introduced a staff as well, and pointed to a sketch for a singer's

melody, or a guide to an actor's intonation. As we approach the meaning of the text of a Bach cantata, or a Shakespearean drama, in the totality of their μουσική, so perhaps shall we begin to interpret the word-music of Homeric epic, and the λόγος of Pindar's lyrics.

2

Choreia and the Musical Text

Μουσική is a term whose historical semantic ground is in the dance of the Muses—it means the art of the Muses—and the *Μοῦσαι* are described as divine dancers (Hesiod, *Theogony* 4). Hence it is a term that appears to refer to an art of physical movement, and at the same time to its Inspiring Powers. But *μουσική* comes to be distinguished in Greek usage from *γυμναστική*, the art of the naked athlete—as famously in Plato; and so there had come to be, in time, a synchronic semantic contrast between *μουσική* and *γυμναστική*, such that the latter referred to physical education. The former then referred to the arts of speech and of the mind, to what is *not* bodily, to what would come to be called literature and even science. There is therefore something equivocal, perhaps, about 'dance' from the Greek perspective, in its relation to poetry and the intellect on the one hand, and the physicality of movement on the other. *Χορεία*, in Plato's late usage, restores a reference, and embodies a synthesis, that *μουσική* lost by having become the non-physical pole in a contrasting pair: most directly *χορεία* refers to dance, to a concrete patterned movement that can be exhibited by a planet as well as a chorus of dancers; but, like the original *μουσική*, it almost always makes this reference under the purview of a poetic text—that is to say, it refers to dance *and* song, to dance that moves under the power of poetry and a poet.

The substance of ancient Greek poetical composition is rooted in the physicality of dance. The dynamism of ancient verse is born in the interconnection between the rhythm felt in the measured vigour of dancing feet, on the one hand, and that harmony whose instrument is the human voice and whose material is the accentual melody of Greek words in the flexibility of their order. Many of the clues to

an understanding of this Greek form of composition come from the older Plato. The poetics of χορεία has its fullest expression in the *Laws*: however one finally interprets the relation between poetics and politics there, it is at least clear that the conception of the best governance of human political life as a kind of *orchestration*, is taken in that work to its furthest extreme.

Plato says in the *Timaeus* that the salutary effects of harmony and rhythm are due to the imitation (μίμησις) of the divine harmony in our mortal motions (47d, 80c). The circularity of planetary motions suggests that he is thinking here of the strophe, the Greek institution of singing while circle-dancing. An ancient witness (pseudo-Aristotle, *Problems* XIX, 918^{b}14) asks: Διὰ τί οἱ μὲν νόμοι οὐκ ἐν ἀντιστρόφοις ἐποιοῦντο, αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι ᾠδαὶ αἱ χορικαί; ('Why were the *nomes* not composed in antistrophes, while the other choric songs were?') He implies that all the Greek choral songs that were not called 'nomes' were circle dances. He goes on to suggest that these non-antistrophic choral songs were contest pieces aiming at imitation of a certain kind, and hence also to imply that circle dances hindered the attempt to be imitative. But the planet-gods, with their forward runs and retrogressions in the heavenly round, may well have been the direct objects of imitation in the traditional dance. It is certainly striking that Plato uses χορεία in the sense of 'planetary orbit' (*Timaeus* 40c). When it comes to the dancer, in relation to his object, we should perhaps express what Plato intends by the 'imitation' of the divine as the experience of a kind of sympathetic resonance. Perhaps it is this resonance which all acts of imitation, whether of child or poet, ultimately seek.

The kind of harmony described by Plato extends in its range of application, like the untranslatable μουσική, over both what we call poetry and what we are now accustomed to call 'music'. It is well to remember this in connection with that principle of ancient poetics, that 'art is imitation'. What does music imitate? The elements of rhythm and harmony resist direct attachment to external referents. Poetry *is* a measurement, of sound, thought, and space, and not some copy or mime of such measurement. Numbers are things you dance, and dancing is stylized counting. It is not always clear that when people dance, they are imitating anything at all, unless it be other dancing things (such as the planets).

It was a turning point in the choral rendition of myth when a dancer stepped out from the chorus to perform solo in metre, pretending actually to *be* one of the protagonists in the story. (Compare a parallel development in the choral settings of the Christian Passion story, culminating in Bach.) It is not clear who first thought of pulling such a dancer out of the chorus. Philoxenus the dithyrambist is known to have used soloists in conjunction with a chorus in his *Cyclops*:

with its two solo singers (one of whom sings to the lyre) and its entries and exits it clearly bursts the traditional bounds of dithyramb. It is not surprising that two late sources refer to it as a drama. We might describe it as a chamber opera or operetta.[1]

If Aristotle is right, however, it was Aeschylus who pulled out a second dancer so that the pair could re-enact a dialogue (*Poetics* 1449[a]16). His narrative suggests that this was actually an innovation in the dithyramb, a crucial step on its way to becoming tragedy. Hence Philoxenus may merely have been a late capitulator in his genre. As for τὰ δρώμενα, that is, liturgical or cultic drama, we may only speculate on its historical development, its use of choruses, and its relationship to the emergent forms of the Aeschylean theatre and its 'profanations'. But how and whenever it was that the soloists stepped forward, instantly they became actors; theatrical drama made its appearance in the Greek world and turned that world into a stage. The poetic sensibility of a Pindar, with its fluidity of identity between poet and chorus, its mesmeric, stylized, verbal-orchestic narration of myth, was instantly antiquated; the dramatist emerged; the actor entered upon the stage of history. The histrionic presence of the actor, the dramatic representation of life, the impetus towards realism in the artistic ideal, were developments that were bound to revolutionize the relation between artist, performer, and audience.

West refers to 'star performers' also in the purely instrumental genres:

This was an age in which, in music as in the theatre, public enthusiasm was increasingly focused on the virtuoso skills, personality, and showmanship of the individual performer. The leading auletes, for example, enjoyed a higher

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[1] M. L. West, *Ancient Greek Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992, 365–6.

status than ever before. The most celebrated aulete of the time was Prono-
mus, a Theban … He captivated audiences not just by his playing but by his
facial expression and the whole movement of his body …

The musician who aroused the greatest popular enthusiasm was the
citharode.[2]

When it comes to the performance of Homer, such a development
was paralleled in the emergence of the rhapsode—a solo, standing,
staff-bearing, lyre-less declaimer in the theatre, playing all the
parts—as against the depictions *inside* Homer of the bard, who is a
seated, lyre-playing singer, circled on occasion by a ring of dancers. It
is no wonder that in the fourth century, philosophical reflection on
art should have been fixated on this new 'rhapsodic' power, concen-
trated by the poet-dramatist through the actor; it is no wonder that
imitation should have been at the focus of the philosophical lens. The
performer and his story became the central facts of Greek poetry,
dimming by comparison the centuries-long tradition of danced verse
from which he emerged.

With the development of the actor and the drama, the traditional
chorus was set adrift of its moorings and grew increasingly marginal
and independent. Indeed, to fit the new paradigm, the chorus had
itself to become representational. What had been a composer's
orchestra was obliged to become a dramatist's vehicle, costumed
and perhaps even masked: a chorus of old men, or libation-bearing
women, or Furies. Unlike music and dance, which need not be
imitative, the phenomenon of the dramatic personation and repre-
sentation of myth could be linked directly to depictions in the visual
and the plastic arts, and imitation became the central concern of
philosophical approaches to poetry and poetics. (To be sure, dancers
themselves remained a subject for representation in vase painting and
statuary.) The fact remains, however, that Aristotle's conception of
tragedy as a kind of mimetic or representational art, combined with
his neglect of its roots as a species of $\chi o \rho \epsilon i a$, is symptomatic of a
distortion of the poetic realities as they are found in the whole train
of poets from Homer to Euripides. Consider, for example, his famous
list of the parts of tragedy: plot ($\mu \hat{v} \theta o \varsigma$), character ($\mathring{\eta} \theta \eta$), diction
($\lambda \acute{\epsilon} \xi \iota \varsigma$), thought ($\delta \iota \acute{a} v o \iota a$), spectacle ($\mathring{o} \psi \iota \varsigma$), and song ($\mu \epsilon \lambda o \pi o \iota \acute{\iota} a$)

[2] Ibid. 366–8.

(1450ᵃ9–10). Of these, the first four are emphasized as ἀρχαί (principles), while the last two are accorded a secondary status as the chief among tragedy's 'remaining pleasantries' (1450ᵇ15–16); whereas it is the last two in particular that have a bearing on the orchestral reality that was rendered on stage. The very abstractness of Aristotle's principles has allowed them, for better or for worse, a life of their own in western criticism; but it is a mistake to confuse critical principles with poetical principles, as Aristotle's occasionally prescriptive turns of phrase intend to do, and it is a grosser mistake to take Aristotle's critical abstractions for the principles of a specifically Greek poetics.

Compare, for example, his chapter 12, where these same parts of tragedy that he has classified as *species* are distinguished from the *number* of segments into which tragedy is actually divided (such as prologue, episode, exode, etc.). It is apparent that even in Aristotle's day, the entire sequence of events in a tragedy was defined and determined not in terms of the represented actions but in terms of the movements of the dance group or chorus. It would seem that from one traditional perspective, a Greek tragedy was, formally, more like a Bach dance suite, with distinct movements rendering an autonomous and intrinsic musical structure, than it was like a play, with acts. A poet (properly, a χοροδιδάσκαλος, 'chorus teacher') must have approached his dramaturgy with some very practical questions of form, about how to render a μῦθος into dialogue between and through a sequence of choral odes and movements. Aristotle goes on to say that the stasimon can have no trochees or anapaests; hence the sections have a distinctive metrical character. From the perspective of poetics in the active sense, Aristotle's distinction between form and quantity therefore breaks down. We no longer step the steps, nor dance the dances if we want to understand Bach's music; but the situation was different for Bach and his audience. The division of a drama into choric movements may have been something of a traditionalism in Aristotle's time, but it was surely not always so.

We should remember that Aristotle lived after the tragedian Agathon: he did not see the original flowering of Attic drama first-hand, and his historical judgement was therefore not informed by it. The fact is that all three of the great tragedians cut their teeth on the poetry of choral lyric; composing dances simply *was* the poetic act, as

they would have met with it in their youth in the age of Pindar. This point of origin in music and dance sets them off from all other later kinds of western playwright, except, perhaps, the composers of modern opera; although from an Aristotelian point of view, as imitators of action in drama, they are all one. It stands to reason that there may be some subtle and some not so subtle ways in which the highly stylized medium within which Greek poets worked might have affected their various representations of reality. Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides knew drama as an outgrowth of the choral rendition of myth. *We don't.*

Even Aristotle can suffer misinterpretation at the hands of his theory. Consider his famous remark, that the iambic is the most speakable of metres (1449[a]25). We most often speak iambs in conversation, says Aristotle, rarely hexameters, and then only with a harmonic affectation. Students tend to interpret him as saying that the tragedians chose the iambic trimeter for the conversational parts of tragedy because they wanted most accurately to imitate the natural speech rhythms of daily Greek. This is just the sort of thing that is spoon-fed to students of Shakespeare. If dramatists want to imitate natural speech, why do they write verse at all? When Aristotle says that tragic poetry used to be more orchestic, so that it was expressed in tetrameter, but that when speech arose in it 'nature herself' discovered the metre appropriate to speech—for the iambic is the most speakable of metres—he means simply that when lyric poets, composers of *dances*, came to choose among the various dance measures with which they might render *dialogue*, they eventually selected the iambic. The trochaic tetrameter—the original dialogue metre according to Aristotle—only made sense, only sounded natural, when a speaker stepped in rhythm with the words, as is the case with a marching song or military cadence. Aristotle is explicit that the tetrameter was connected to dance, and belonged to a time when tragic poetry as a whole was 'satyric and more orchestic' (1449[a]23). The iambic trimeter, on the other hand, could be rendered intelligibly with the voice alone, without supporting movement, and so on this point at least it could have been considered more suitable for dramatic dialogue.

But it must be remembered that the tragic trimeter when written by an Aeschylus was written by a composer of choral lyric: this was

his native and his professional skill. The fact that his dialogue verse was speakable, does not mean that it was speech-like. Whether or not Aristotle meant to make this leap, his students are wont to frolic. Consider this remark from a metrical manual: 'According to Aristotle ... the iambic trimeter is of all meters the closest approximation to ordinary speech. Hence it was used in contexts where poetic elevation or embellishment was not a desideratum, as in the conversational passages of Attic drama.'[3] It is remarkable that the influence of this interpretation might actually blind a scholar to the magnificence and the artifice of tragic dialogue. Where are these conversational passages? In point of fact, the tragic trimeter is a highly stylized medium, both in terms of its diction and in terms of its rhythmic constraints (such as its observation of Porson's Bridge). It can be evoked, imitated, and satirized on both these grounds, as, for example, by Aristophanes and A. E. Housman. *Nothing* about the trimeter in the hands of the great tragedians, whether its sound, its diction, its rhythm, tends toward realism with respect to normal speech. I do not speak of its meaning or its effects, but of the verse itself.

Perhaps the sensibility was different in the tragedy of Aristotle's day. The case for realistic imitation would certainly have been more interesting for the comic trimeter, which does not display all the rhythmic constraints of the tragic version, and may never have been orchestic; Aristotle traces comic iambics to an earlier invective style of poetry, perhaps a kind of ancient stand-up comedy (1448[b]31–2). But it is far more likely that what is called a metre in ancient Greek was always, to begin with, a dance measure (even if modified by the epithet 'iambic'). The elements of metre are *feet*! The writer of *Problems* XIX appears to distinguish that which is ἀπὸ τῆς σκηνῆς, the material of staged drama that is *not* choral ode, not as speech from song, but as choral ode that is not antistrophic (918[b]27). The actor (ὑποκριτής) was evidently also a dancer, just not a circle dancer. There are indeed many passages in Greek drama where a 'conversation' occurs between a soloist in lyric metre, including strophic systems, and a chorus in the trimeter, or a chorus in full lyric with

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[3] James W. Halporn, Martin Ostwald, and Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, *The Meters of Greek and Latin Poetry,* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980, 14.

a protagonist in the trimeter. The passages of stylized stichomythia, all in trimeter, strike the listener even in translation as a kind of strange duet, rather than a conversation. It is possible therefore that the longer speeches in trimeter as well were choreographed in a way to which we are not so used in the Shakespearean soliloquy.

Plato is explicit that metres measure bodily motion, not speech, in a passage that means to be definitional:

ἐπειδὰν λάβῃς τὰ διαστήματα ὁπόσα ἐστὶ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῆς φωνῆς ὀξύτητός τε πέρι καὶ βαρύτητος, καὶ ὁποῖα, καὶ τοὺς ὅρους τῶν διαστημάτων, καὶ τὰ ἐκ τούτων ὅσα συστήματα γέγονεν, ἃ κατίδοντες οἱ πρόσθεν παρέδοσαν ἡμῖν τοῖς ἑπομένοις ἐκείνοις καλεῖν αὐτὰ ἁρμονίας ἔν τε ταῖς κινήσεσιν αὖ τοῦ σώματος ἕτερα τοιαῦτα ἐνόντα πάθη γιγνόμενα, ἃ δὴ δι᾽ ἀριθμῶν μετρηθέντα δεῖν αὖ φασὶ ῥυθμοὺς καὶ μέτρα ἐπονομάζειν, καὶ ἅμα ἐννοεῖν ὡς οὕτω δεῖ περὶ παντὸς ἑνὸς καὶ πολλῶν σκοπεῖν· ὅταν γὰρ αὐτά τε λάβῃς οὕτω, τότε ἐγένου σοφός   (*Philebus* 17c–d)

when you grasp the intervals—how many they are in number, of the voice with respect to sharpness and heaviness, and of what kinds, as well as the boundaries of the intervals, and the things that have arisen as constructions out of these, which the men prior to us noted and handed down to us who follow them, so that we call them 'harmonies'—and in the motions in turn of the body, other experiences of this sort that arise, which, being measured by numbers, they say we must name 'rhythms' and 'metres'—and at the same time you recognize that in this way we must examine *every* case of 'one and many'—when you grasp things in this way, then you become wise.

Note that in Socrates' description it is the elements of harmony, 'sharpness' (ὀξύτης) and 'heaviness' (βαρύτης), that have their origin in the voice. Rhythms and metres do *not* arise from the voice; they are different and yet related (ἕτερα τοιαῦτα) to the vocally based con- figurations; but in their being they are numberings of *motions of the body.* That there was an extralinguistic object-source of metre in physical motion was apparently a traditional teaching in the Greece of Plato's time. Note the nature of this and other evidence I supply from Plato: he provides descriptions of poetic phenomena that are not meant to be controversial, but rather familiar and obvious, and hence capable of being paradigmatic for other arguments in his works. This is why these passages are so valuable as evidence: unlike the typical assertions among both Homerists and linguists, they

point directly and unambiguously to an extra-linguistic origin of metre in Greek poetry.

The round dance informs Greek mythic narrative to create the genres of epic, lyric, and drama. Aristotle grew up in the age of invented plots, an innovation he ascribes to Agathon (*Poetics* 1451$^{\mathrm{b}}$21). This may be why $\mu\hat{\nu}\theta\sigma$ acquires the sense 'plot' for him, and signifies in the analysis of the *Poetics* as a component of the constructed imitation. To be sure, performance can elicit invention; and even without the element of invention, it may be that $\mu\hat{\nu}\theta\sigma$ before Aristotle demands to be understood in the context of performance.[4] But Aristotle himself speaks of the 'received myths' ($\tau\hat{\omega}\nu\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\delta\epsilon\delta\sigma\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\nu$ $\mu\acute{\nu}\theta\omega\nu$, 1452$^{\mathrm{b}}$24). At least in part, therefore, the $\mu\hat{\nu}\theta\sigma$ is the *object* of the imitation, the story which may be passed on from generation to generation and which is *given* to the artist, who attempts to conceive it and localize it in his peculiar orchestra—whether in hexameter phrasing and ring composition, or in strophe and antistrophe, or as a drama shaped around and through a sequence of choral odes.

Received myth is linear narrative, and dance is circling, speechless rhythm. Yet in the highly stylized and independent medium of the round dance—where the human animal may come to feel, in his erratic sinews, as he joins hands with his community, his measure of participation in the awesome circling of divinity—the dance becomes revelatory of its object. The choral form gives shape to myth. $M\hat{\nu}\theta\sigma$ itself is revealed, as story and as word: in an artful composition the story is illuminated by the choral structure, at the same time and moment that the word comes to be experienced in its musical substance. That these are revelations of the $\mu\hat{\nu}\theta\sigma$, rather than impositions upon the story by the constraints of the dance, can be seen in a general way by the survival of choral forms in poetry and story telling beyond the demise of the dance in its living presence. Ring composition is now a technique of narrative simply; responsion in rhythm (and rhyme) is still definitive in lyric verse; while the structural function and the dramatic and psychological illumination of the chorus are still the envy and the experiment of the modern

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[4] See Gregory Nagy, *Homeric Questions*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996, 113–46.

dramatist, who misses most of all, perhaps, the orchestic, communal origins of his medium.

In the Greek context, the context of μουσική, we must begin to learn to view poetry as χορεία. It is of no small import to the success of this study that Plato, in his later years, seems to have become entranced by the dance of the Muses. Imitation was still a doubtful thing; but in the *Timaeus* and the *Laws* (and the *Epinomis* as well), χορεία is a divine thing. One is hard put to understand whether this view represents a change of heart. But Plato cared enough about χορεία for its own sake that he left us, in passing, the material for a truly useful analysis of its structure.

The great age of the choral lyric medium came to an end in Plato's lifetime. In his earlier work he had been obsessed with the representations of this medium, in particular with the dangerous untruths of histrionic μίμησις, and its effects on an impressionable audience. His criticism on these grounds was as much directed towards the reverend Homer as it was to the modern Euripides. But from the perspective of the poetic medium itself, Euripides was the occasion of a genuine revolution in the conception of μουσική—a revolution that helps make intelligible a descent of this conception into 'music' as a thing separate from language. Euripides invented *melisma*. When he sundered rhythm and harmony from their tether in the syllable, so that the syllable was no longer the measure of time and melody, but could instead occupy several units of time, if need be, and bear several 'notes' of the melody—producing the melismatic effect that was lampooned by Aristophanes[5] and lamented by Plato, the effect that is now characteristic of western song—Euripides dissolved the unity of χορεία. This unity was grounded in the dominance of the word, which bore in Greek not only meaning, but also rhythm—for Greek syllables are given in quantity—and a melodic pattern, for Greek words are given in pitch contour. The unity of χορεία grew out of the aesthetic richness of the Greek language itself, where the unit of meaning was also a fixed rhythmic substance and a melodic unit. Words suitably arranged were also dances in the round, with no equivocation; this is the significance of 'periods' or 'strophes' understood as units of poetic speech. When Euripides wrote his choral

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[5] See e.g. West, *Ancient Greek Music*, 45.

extravaganzas, the word and the syllable were no longer the measure of all: the melody and rhythm grew to have a more independent pattern and significance. So in all the later traditions of the West, music has been one thing, dance another, and poetry still another. Banished forever to a cultural dream-time are the days when words were things one could dance, as an *integral* part of their expression.

As Plato describes it, a lyric $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda os$ was made up of three things: speech, harmony, and rhythm (*Republic* 398d). But after its composition, a lyric was preserved only as speech, as a sequence of words (or strictly, letters) in a written text. In this form it could be quoted and interpreted, in the manner of the discussion of Simonides' poem in Plato's *Protagoras* (339a ff.). It is apparent, however, that according to the linguistic profile of Greek, to preserve a sequence of words is also to preserve a certain accentual harmony and a quantitative rhythm; and that before Euripides' innovations, this harmony and rhythm were the originals, the constituents of the $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda os$. As Plato says, the melic harmony and rhythm 'follow' ($\mathring{a}\kappa o\lambda o\upsilon\theta\epsilon\hat{\iota}\nu$) the melic word ($\lambda\acute{o}\gamma os$) (*Republic* 398d); and in the *Laws*, the $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda os$ 'suggests and awakens' the rhythm ($\tau o\hat{\upsilon}$ $\delta\grave{\epsilon}$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda o\upsilon s$ $\mathring{\upsilon}\pi o\mu\iota\mu\nu\acute{\eta}\sigma\kappa o\nu\tau os$ $\kappa a\grave{\iota}$ $\mathring{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\rho o\nu\tau os$ $\tau\grave{o}\nu$ $\mathring{\rho}\upsilon\theta\mu\acute{o}\nu$, 673d). The rhythmic pattern is of course fully given in the syllabic quantities; while the contours of a word's accentual contonation would have guided the tunesmith's hand, as he drew out the notes of the melody in a suitable harmonic mode.

It was apparently fashionable in the revivals of the time of Plato's *Laws* for the traditional melic texts, and possibly the fifth-century tragic choruses as well, to be treated by arrangers and performers in the new way, as if the words were music-less abstractions that could be set to a variety of 'melismatic' rhythms and melodies. This is why, when he wants to introduce some of the traditional poems and dances into his city (802a), the Athenian says his lawgiver must himself prescribe the harmonies and rhythms to which the $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\eta$ will be set; for 'it is a terrible thing to sing "off" with the whole harmony, or to "unrhythm" to the rhythm, having assigned unsuitable ones to each of the songs' ($\delta\epsilon\iota\nu\grave{o}\nu$ $\gamma\grave{a}\rho$ $\mathring{o}\lambda\eta$ $\gamma\epsilon$ $\mathring{a}\rho\mu o\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ $\mathring{a}\pi\acute{a}\delta\epsilon\iota\nu$ $\mathring{\eta}$ $\mathring{\rho}\upsilon\theta\mu\hat{\omega}$ $\mathring{a}\rho\rho\upsilon\theta\mu\epsilon\hat{\iota}\nu$, $\mu\eta\delta\grave{\epsilon}\nu$ $\pi\rho o\sigma\acute{\eta}\kappa o\nu\tau a$ $\tau o\acute{\upsilon}\tau\omega\nu$ $\mathring{\epsilon}\kappa\acute{a}\sigma\tau o\iota s$ $\mathring{a}\pi o\delta\iota\delta\acute{o}\nu\tau a$ $\tau o\hat{\iota}s$ $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\sigma\iota\nu$) (802e). The Athenian's prescription is a rearguard action against what is often referred to as the New Music.

Extant musical fragments are, unfortunately, not reliable as indicators of what Plato might have preferred. The 'Song of Seikilos' in the Aydin inscription does appear to show a correspondence between accentual and melodic patterns, as Allen and others have observed; but it is a late source that also shows melisma. Such a correspondence is also claimed for the Delphic hymns.[6] But the New Music was a watershed, after which even classical texts were rescored. (One may imagine a new and renewable industry for composers in resetting old standards every generation or so.) It is only after the New Music of Euripides that one could no longer derive the shape of the μέλος from the written word, because the syllable could then be broken up for effect, rhythmically and melodically, in performance. From that generation on, words have had to be *set* to music; in the age of choral lyric and μουσική, they *were* music. One can hardly complain about all the results of this change; the sublime development of musical settings of the written text of the mass, for instance, from Gregorian chant through polyphony to Beethoven and beyond, is no more nor less than a guide to the spiritual-aesthetic history of the West.[7] But it is important for students of the Greek poets to realize that there has been an apparently irreversible transformation in the relation between written speech and music, which lies between us and our interpretive habits, and their remaining texts.

The written word so treated, abstracted from the tonal nature of real words, and capable of being re-set to music, has had a profound impact on the development of criticism and linguistic scholarship. To begin with, the written text has altered literate speakers' perception of the reality of language. When we look at writing, we think we are looking at words, rather than at suggestions or reminders (ὑπομνήματα) of what Plato in the *Phaedrus* calls 'living' words (276a). Such written words appear to be made up of letters—again, most literate people in and outside of academia would say that words are made up of letters—and the written letters appear to be nothing

[6] See A. M. Devine and L. D. Stephens, *The Prosody of Greek Speech*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994, 172–3; also Egert Pöhlmann and Martin L. West, *Documents of Ancient Greek Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 17.

[7] Thrasybulos Georgiades, *Music and Language: the Rise of Western Music as Exemplified in Settings of the Mass*, tr. Marie Louise Göllner, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982, *passim*.

else than arbitrary signs. It quietly follows that words are nothing else than signs. The empirical fact, however, is that words are *things*, accentual and rhythmic as well as phonemic substances. There can be nothing arbitrary about substantial things, and hence nothing merely symbolic about words. Poets, in whose speech there are no synonyms, have always known this about words. For Homer, who was least infected among poets by the σήματα λυγρά ('baneful tokens', *Il.* 6. 168, the only apparent reference in Homer, to writing), words were winged things that flew between the lungs and minds of men. The notion of 'winged words' is in a sense less metaphorical than that of 'written' words; in the time between utterance and audition, a word is potentially any number of things, but it *is* actually a moving disturbance of air. Of course the written imitation does reflect a part of the reality; but it is surely a distinction of some moment to say not that words *are* signs, but that words can *function* in abstraction as signs, much in the way of any other substantive thing that can function as a sign or symbol.

In linguistics, alphabetic writing has prejudiced the analysis of *langue* in favour of the phoneme. While the accentual and rhythmic features are an integral and even a dominant part of the experience of actual speech, since the days of the ancient grammarians, the letter-mongers, they have been called elements of προσῳδία, or elements literally of the 'added song'. Prosody as an epiphenomenon is entirely a prejudice of the letter-mongers and their diacritical marks. It is not only in the case of ancient Greek that the neglect or thoughtless treatment of prosodic features might have masked a reconstruction, or even distorted the phonological analysis. A discovery as surprising and groundbreaking as Verner's Law, which links a well-known consonant shift in proto-German to accentual position, ought long since to have suggested that prosody is an overarching, rather than an epi-phenomenon, and a foundation for analyses. John Goldsmith's autosegmental phonology represents a new beginning in this direction.[8] For students of the Greek language in particular, as its speakers understood it until Plato's time, let it at least be remembered that it was prose that was bare (ψιλόν), not poetry that was embellished.

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[8] See e.g. John A. Goldsmith, *Autosegmental and Metrical Phonology*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

In the generation after Plato, Aristoxenus the Peripatetic wrote separate treatises on harmony and rhythm. No treatise has come to us from the ancient world on χορεία. It is only in that critical time between Euripides and the Aristotelians, Plato's time, that harmony and rhythm were seen as distinct elements and yet still subordinate to a greater unity. From the perspective of χορεία, the distinction between harmony and rhythm has only an analytical reality; whereas afterwards and ever since, they have comprised separate subject matters and demanded separate treatments. Music nowadays is an art of putting these two things together; but in ancient Greece, harmony and rhythm came together already united in the word. It is this musical word with which the Greek poet composed, whether in epic or elegiac, lyric or dramatic metres; it is the aesthetic fullness of the word, a sensible substance determined in pitch and rhythm as well as the bearer of meaning, a word that can be *performed*, which makes Greek poems unique kinds of composition demanding a unique critical approach.

The discovery of a tenable theory of the Greek accent has at last made this possible: we can now approach Greek verse as χορεία. '*Choreia*, of course, is dance and song, taken as a whole' ($Xορεία\ γε$ $μὴν\ ὄρχησίς\ τε\ καὶ\ ᾠδὴ\ τὸ\ ξύνολόν\ ἐστιν$, 654b), says Plato in the *Laws*; and in a passage that will serve as our guide from now on,

τῇ δὴ τῆς κινήσεως τάξει ῥυθμὸς ὄνομα εἴη, τῇ δ'αὖ τῆς φωνῆς, τοῦ τε ὀξέος ἅμα καὶ βαρέος συγκεραννυμένων, ἁρμονία ὄνομα προσαγορεύοιτο, χορεία δὲ τὸ ξυναμφότερον κληθείη   (665a)

As for the arrangement of motion, its name is 'rhythm'; while the arrangement of the voice, of the sharp (ὀξύς) along with the heavy (βαρύς) mixed together, is given the name 'harmony'; and 'choreia' is what the combination is called.

We shall attempt to examine Greek poetic compositions under each of these heads: in terms of their rhythm, in terms of their harmony, and finally in terms of the total effect of the combination, of the effect of the words as χορεία.

Let me draw a line under the analytic quality of the distinction here between rhythm and harmony. Writers ancient and modern have distinguished between 'rhythm' and 'metre'; let me say also

how I shall be using these words. In point of fact, the three terms—
'harmony', 'rhythm', 'metre'—form a complex in the analysis of
Greek poetry; none of them turns out to be independently formul-
able. Metre is the most independent: it supplies a pattern of ictus
from a dance movement that is often transparently ascending or
descending in rhythm. But consider a collocation like this, often
called a 'choriamb': —∪∪—. Where is the ictus? There are two
long theses. Is the first one prominent, and the second trailing and
transitional? Or is the second one the culmination of an ascending
motion? Or are they both prominent, forcing a modulation from
descending to ascending (trochee to iamb)? In this case, rhythm must
be distinguished from metre; prominence must be supplied from
another source before the ambiguous metrical pattern can show a
rhythm. The source of this prominence is accentual harmony. The
pattern of accent also is relatively independent: the melodic shape of
a sequence of Greek words or syllables is given in non-metrical as well
as metrical environments. But we shall see that the pitch patterns in
Greek words cause particular syllables to be dynamically prominent,
in a way that is directly related to syllabic quantity at the ends of
words. Hence accentual patterns not only supply a melodic shape to
poetic performance (prior to the New Music at any rate); they also
produce a natural rhythm in Greek words by making particular
syllables dynamically prominent (or 'stressed'). We shall, however,
identify a particular class of words as naturally 'doubtful' rhythmic-
ally, potentially one way or another in a particular metrical environ-
ment. Hence even the term 'natural rhythm' is a part of the complex,
and must be used advisedly. Natural rhythm becomes poetic rhythm
when the dynamic prominences determine the sense of a metrical
pattern. Hence in Greek, natural rhythm is a stepchild of harmony,
and poetic rhythm of natural rhythm and metre.

   Rhythm in Aristoxenus is an abstract notion, a division and
ordering of time (or 'times') (*Elements of Rhythm*, 2.2). As we have
noted, however, Plato rather emphasizes the physicality of rhythm: it
is a measurement and ordering of motion, of the body in dance. The
explicit origin of Greek metre in dance, rather than from a linguistic
or from some other extra-linguistic source, can be inferred from the
fact that Plato can analyse χορεία into dance and song in one passage,
or into rhythm and harmony in another. Emile Benveniste writes that

before Plato, rhythm meant 'form' more broadly, in the usage of the Ionian philosophers, for example, or in Herodotus, who speaks of the rhythm of written letters; he credits Plato with the first extant use of the word in the musical sense it has kept until today.[9] As we have seen Plato describe them in the *Philebus*, rhythms and metres are names for the numerical measurement of bodily motions.

Students of the Greek poets are likely to think of metres as dissociated abstractions in the appendices of texts. For all that the lyric metrical schemes of Greek are by-products, as it were, of the words themselves, it is not commonly suggested that the metre might have some relevance to the matter, that metre can be significant. Metres, we are likely to be told, are abstract systems of formal cons-traints. But think about the nature of a foot: there is nothing either abstract or formal about it; it is, in fact, the most pedestrian thing there is. A poetic foot in Greece was a dance step; it consisted of an ἄρσις and a θέσις, literally a raising and lowering of the foot in the air, as Bacchius the Elder describes it,[10] or as I rather think, an up-beat and a down-beat, light passing steps and a heavy step that carried the ictus. Iamb or anapaest, trochee or dactyl, a foot was something you could *step out* (βαίνειν). If a dance began ἐπὶ τὸ δεξιόν, on the right foot for luck, and ended on the right foot as well in the final antistrophe or epode, we have a hypothesis for reconstructing the steps of an ode. One need only remember, as a general maxim, to put one foot after another; or to put it another way, the left foot must come between successive steps of the right. If my reader can walk, or has seen people walk, he will quickly grasp the *real* constraints inherent in Greek metre.

A. M. Devine and L. D. Stephens write a chapter on rhythm, in their comprehensive *The Prosody of Greek Speech*, which makes no mention of dance. A certain line of scholarship eschews extra-linguistic forces in its accounts of metre.[11] Plato is explicit, however, that rhythms and metres are measures not of speech but of bodily motion. Whatever the merits of the case in other language contexts,

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[9] Emile Benveniste, 'The Notion of "Rhythm" in its Linguistic Expression', *Problems in General Linguistics,* Coral Gables, Fla.: University of Miami Press, 1971, 281–8.

[10] Bacchius, *Isagoge* 98, quoted in editor's introduction to *Aristoxenus*, Elementa Rhythmica, ed. Lionel Pearson, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990, p. xxiv.

[11] Devine and Stephens, *The Prosody of Greek Speech*, 100–1.

that verse is 'merely the language itself, running in its natural grooves',[12] the position is untenable with respect to the poetry of Homer and ancient Greece. There is an overwhelming *prima facie* case for the influence of dance upon metrical form in ancient Greek verse, whereas only a portion of the corpus can be seen to reflect the iambic 'grooves' of normal speech to which Aristotle refers. The entire list of descriptive terms generated by poets and grammarians, such as arsis, thesis, the foot itself, period, strophe, and chorus—not to mention the use of the verb βαίνειν ('step out' or ἐμβαίνειν—see e.g. Plato's *Alcibiades* 108a, c) and the noun βάσις ('measured step', *Republic* 399e, 400a) to describe the performance of a foot—must either be ignored on this line, or be understood to participate in some extended metaphor of societal and cultural compass.

A new synthesis may be at hand, however. David McNeill's pioneering work on gesture makes a powerful case for an integrative analysis of speech with respect to phenomena traditionally thought to be extra-linguistic. Although gestures are implemented primarily by the hands and arms, and the metrical aspect of these movements is relatively minor,[13] dance and verse which is sung and danced in the round can be understood as large-scale, public species of formalized gesture, and certain of the theses developed by McNeill seem to apply in illuminating ways. The one-gesture-per-clause rule,[14] for example, can be seen to reflect the general linkage between rhythmic periods— segments of the dance—and semantic units. The phenomenon of agreement at period end can be understood as an accentual formalization of this rule, while the exclusively poetic phenomenon of *enjambement* can be seen as the emphatic transgression of a clause over stylized gestural boundaries. The notion of periodic reinforcement would seem to link footstep, gesture, voice, and meaning; it is a shaft driven through and beyond the tiers of a segmental analysis, linking bodily ictus with accent, phone, word, and clause.

The genre of danced verse was in no sense unique to the Greeks among the Indo-European cultures. There exists to this day a tradition

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[12] E. Sapir quoted ibid. 101.

[13] David McNeill, *Psycholinguistics: A New Approach*, New York: Harper and Row, 1987, 221–5.

[14] Ibid. 19–20.

of dancing heroic ballads in the round, in the far-flung Faroe Islands. Jonathan Wylie and David Margolin have made a study of Faroese culture, for which the heroic round dance served as an appropriately complex metaphor:

In writing these pieces we have kept in mind the image of the *dansiringur*—the 'ring' of dancers singing ballads of wars and loves of heroic times. This kind of ballad dancing is not a Faroese custom (almost nothing is); it is the last survival of a dancing style once common throughout Europe. Late medieval woodcuts and drawings show dancers forming a real circle in the open air, arms linked as the Faroese still link arms, moving round with a step that looks very much like the Faroese step.[15]

On a later page:

The mood is high; the turning circle fills the room; the floor resounds to the beat as the dancers, backs straight and heads turned, 'tread the measure underfoot', two steps forward and one, with a slight kick, back.[16]

There is a dactylic round dance still performed in Greece—no longer an accompaniment to epic poetry, but all the same a remnant of the ancient world—which plays an important role later in this study. There are also other contemporary survivors. Kevin Tuite describes

the Georgian *perqhuli*, a round dance performed by the men of a highland commune at key points during festivals … A variety of song texts can accompany the *perqhuli*, but the most frequent—and the only ones I have ever heard in person—are ballads of semi-legendary heroes & battles—epics if you will. The line is octosyllabic, divided 5 + 3 or 3 + 5.[17]

How is it that the traditional round dances that were a prevalent social institution across Europe, and that often served as the rhythmic framework for European classical music, have been forgotten as the life and source of this music in the transition to modernity? Has there been an irreversible process at work here, where the inheritance of ages, in the form of traditional patterns of motion that circled at

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[15] Jonathan Wylie and David Margolin, *The Ring of Dancers: Images of Faroese Culture*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981, 12.

[16] Ibid. 99.

[17] Kevin Tuite, University of Montreal, personal communication 2004.

the centre of western man's social being, a memory preserved in the foot, has been forever erased—*by* the very music it inspired?

There does seem to be a kind of progressive amnesia, certainly in schools but possibly in societies as well, about the orchestic origins of their poetic and musical structures. The original auditors of the modern seated 'orchestra' were dancers, at whose pleasure the music flowed; while the first audiences of classical music would no doubt have been familiar with the peasant and courtly dances that composers drew on for their rhythms. For them, seated and silent, the experience of 'art' rhythm in what came to be called classical music would have been a sublimation of the familiar pulse and step. But it is hard to imagine that today's seated orchestra and its rigid listeners can have anything but the most abstract perception of the phenomenon of rhythm, even as they experience the music of centuries past, for they have no direct memory in their feet and in their spines of the dance movements which inspired its composition. This process of development in musical culture seems to me to be in need of exploration: it begins in the sublimation of physical dance and participatory song in a transcendent 'art' rhythm and harmony, which demand to be listened to in silence; the aesthetic rapture of such silent listening appears to lead to amnesia and ignorance about the original movements, perhaps even to their obsolescence, while it leads at the very same time to the recognition of the derived 'art' versions as fixed canons of classical or popular form.

This process is exemplified by the history of the epic hexameter. The evidence that epic verse is in dance rhythm is neither hidden nor ambiguous, within and outside the poems themselves. We shall examine some of the direct evidence in due course; for now one need only remind oneself that a metre was a measure of bodily motion, and that the Greeks understood the epic hexameter to be made up of what they called 'feet', or dance steps. No one is known to have been dancing to Homer in Plato's or Aristotle's time, however, and none may have done so in their living memory; a talented rhapsode would have commanded the attention of a still and silent audience. The original vigour of the feet had been sublimated in a rhythmic pattern of speech that served Greek versifiers as the classical vehicle, from Cadmean times onwards (see Herodotus 5.58–9), for epigrams, for prophecy, for moral didactics and theology, and later

for philosophy and natural science, as well as the songs of heroes. I do not propose that we reverse this process, that we stop reading Homer and start dancing him. Roger Norrington, a leader in the 'authentic performance practice' movement, has pointed out that you can dance your way through the whole *St Matthew Passion* of Bach. In one way, this fact is a vital clue to an understanding of the emergent structure of the work. But actually to dance to Bach would be to miss the point. There is something going on in the artist's rendition that transcends dance, or at least leaves it behind. Similarly, to dance to Homer may well get in the way of listening to him. (Experiments I have conducted with students have not settled this question.) What begins as folk dance is transformed, somehow, into a classical form and a narrative. What we can look for, in the part of our analysis that deals with rhythm, are patterns and structures that are native to the original dance which leave their mark on the emergent structures of the poetic narrative.

The round dance, as a source of gesture and form, is a deeply evocative medium. Consider this description of the Faroese ballad dance, constrained as it is by having to be performed inside:

the Faroese ring is only formally a circle; the Faroese dance indoors, in rooms almost too small to hold all the people, and the 'ring' is a great convoluted affair, with loops and eddies and whorls, so that as you dance around you seem everywhere to be passing a line parallel to your own, instead of the open ground and the whole circle of the continental dance. The people pass close before you; individuals are brought face to face for a moment in the stream, to return again familiarly on another verse, or perhaps to disappear, if for some reason they drop out of the dance.[18]

The exquisite sense of the recurrence of the familiar, of the rightness and inevitability of this recurrence and closure, without a sense of monotony or repetition, is apparently a part of the ethos of this movement. One can only get this sense by paying attention to the actual experience of the dancer as he moves ever onwards to the right, but always finally circles. It is remarkable that Homerists have not sought for clues to the structure of epic composition—including its perceived 'inconsistencies and inconcinnities'—in the structure of

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[18] Wylie and Margolin, *The Ring of Daucers*, 12.

the ring dance, the attested medium of Hesiod's circling Muses; but
have instead looked for such clues in a hypothetical, unattested oral
tradition. Perhaps it has been too pedestrian an identification to
make: but the phenomenon of ring composition in epic narrative,
however small or large the compass of these rings, is a reflex of the
emergence of such narrative out of dance in the round. If the song of
epic narrative was or could have served as an accompaniment to a
round dance, if the very rhythm of the dancers' step and motion was
one with the rhythm of the words, it stands to reason that the ethos
of the dance, with its progression and recurrence, would lend its
shape to the narrative which accompanied it—or more than accom-
panied it, moved with its very same rhythm.

These are the first fruits of the new analysis. We have discovered a
concrete, physical, and spatial template for the scholarly disputes that
take place in the abstract about a distinctive feature of epic narrative:
the phenomenon of ring composition. (We shall later consider the
chiastic, 'retrogressive' nature of these epic rings.) This is in the first
place a discovery of fact; but it demands a corresponding change in
critical feeling. For the alien observer, who is used to distinguishing
between narrative and music, ring composition might seem artificial
and repetitive, a feature in need of an explanation as a formalism or a
traditionalism; but for the participant in the round, whether as poet or
as dancer, ring composition in story telling would seem to be as natural
and as artless as the return of the dawn, with her fingertips of rose.

Just as the quantities, the elements of rhythm, are contained in the
words themselves, so do the elements of harmony, ὀξύς and βαρύς,
emerge from the word. Ὀξύς and βαρύς, or sharp and heavy, rising
and falling, were the words the Greeks themselves used to describe the
prosodic features of their language (sometimes along with the level
tone or ὁμότονον—see e.g. Plato's *Philebus* 17c). I shall argue that
these were features of 'tonal stress', which arose out of the possible
placements of the total accentual contonation, rising plus falling, over
different combinations of syllabic quantities, given that a word's
syllabic quantities were determined independently of prosody in
Greek. I shall present a way to ascertain whether a word's contonation
appears in a given environment as ὀξύς ('sharp' (rising)) or βαρύς
('heavy' (falling)); I shall show how to locate these features, given the
marks of pitch contour bequeathed us by the Alexandrians.

It has been passed from generation to generation of student that against all intuition and example, there is no relation in Greek verse between ictus and word accent. We shall examine this relation anew: analysis of the rhythm supplies the pattern of ictus; a reading of the harmony, based on the new theory, provides us for the first time with the true location of the accents. The combination of these, in syncopation, counterpoint, and reinforcement, will prove to be recognizable as the unique musical and poetic epiphany known as χορεία. The practical effect on the dancer of the combination of ictus, accent, and word, is marked in the case of the Faroese ballad (the internal quotation is from a 1906 description):

Faroese dancing is an exercise in continuity and self-control. It links the dancers with their legendary past, mingles all members of the community and focuses their activity. It removes conflicts from the realm of everyday life to a story realm, while the dancers coordinate their voices and movements. 'What, moreover, should be well looked after in the ballad singing is to "get the word under the foot", as the old ones used to say. One gets the word under the foot when one stresses one word or syllable at the same time that one steps along with the foot.'[19]

'Getting the word under the foot' is an extant modern prescription for the experience in danced verse that Plato describes as agreement, between harmony and rhythm, accent and ictus, stress and step. If one could just imagine getting Pindar's word 'under one's foot', one could begin to grasp the astonishing dimensions of the unity of χορεία in the physical projection of the word: for the dancer, the word begins in the rhythm of his foot beneath him, finds harmonic expression through the voice, and seeks its meaning in his highest contemplation, about mortality, the gods, and his community.

What we shall discover, as we apply the terms of χορεία to Greek verse, is the substance of the Platonic rapture: harmony and rhythm, as expressed in accent and ictus, beginning in disagreement, and ending in agreement at the cadence of a period. Some of the most remarkable revelations occur in the lyric genre. The movement from disagreement to cadence is common to all forms of Greek verse, however; and it is fitting that we begin this project at the beginning,

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[19] Ibid. 115.

with Homer. The study of the relation between verse and dance rhythm leads to a fundamental distinction between the stichic metres, on the one hand, such as the hexameter, the elegiac couplet, and the tragic iambic trimeter; and on the other, all the lyric forms. This distinction has been made on other grounds, as one between 'speech' and 'song' forms, by Nagy.[20] The substantial empirical basis of this distinction can be expressed as a formula: whereas the epic, elegiac, and spoken tragic verses were such as could *accompany* dance, lyric verses were *danced*. Such a distinction accounts in particular for the lack of 'metrical substitution' in the lyric forms, which would necessitate a different physical movement; whereas the stichic forms could indulge in the syncopations of an accompanist.

There are many obstacles to a new Homeric poetics. On any side of the current debates, there is a deep-rooted neglect of the possible significance of word accents. Consider this remark on the hexameter from Bernard Knox's otherwise exemplary introduction to a recent translation of the *Iliad*:

though it is always metrically regular, it never becomes monotonous; its internal variety guarantees that. This regularity imposed on variety is Homer's great metrical secret, the strongest weapon in his poetic arsenal. The long line which no matter how it varies in the opening and middle always ends in the same way, builds up its hypnotic effect in book after book, imposing on things and men and gods the same pattern, presenting in a rhythmic microcosm the wandering course to a fixed end which is the pattern of the rage of Achilles and the travels of Odysseus, of all natural phenomena and all human destinies.[21]

Here at last is an attempt to see an organic connection between the metrical pattern and the broader intentions of the verse. But does Homer's long line really always end rhythmically in the same way? In fact, this idea is not justified even by the metre. It is only the metrician's formulation, — x, which makes the last foot always look the same. In any given line, that last syllable is *either* long or short; in real life, there is no anceps. But what is more, neither Homer nor anyone else ever sang a metre; he sang words, with harmonic as

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[20] Nagy, *Pindar's Homer*, 19 ff.
[21] Bernard Knox, 'Introduction', in *Homer*, The Iliad, tr. Robert Fagles, Introd. and Notes by Bernard Knox, New York: Penguin Books, 1991, 12.

well as rhythmic properties. Consider these words found at the ends of lines near the beginning of the *Iliad*: Ἀχιλῆος, ἔθηκε, βουλή, Ἀχαιῶν, χολωθείς. On any reading of the accent marks it must be allowed that each of these words has a different prosodic pattern. There is none of Knox's hypnotic sameness.

It is highly unlikely that the rhapsodes, who recited unaccompanied, recited in a monotone; or that they used a prosody unrelated to the natural one. (The ἁρμονία of epic is, however, said by Aristotle to be somewhat different from the everyday version; we shall discuss this.) The role of the prose accent would seem to be crucial in the Cyclops episode (*Odyssey* 9. 408–14), where one needs to distinguish between Οὖτις and οὔ τις, μή τις and μῆτις, to savour the full wit; and Greek audiences are known to have been ruthless with performers who got their accents wrong.[22] There is therefore a compounding of errors in this description by Knox. In the analysis to come, we shall see examples like the first two words listed above as giving a feminine cadence to the line, on the first element of the final foot; examples like the second two, as giving a masculine cadence on the second 'doubtful' element of the foot; and examples like χολωθείς as either leaving the line unresolved or giving only a partial cadence.

The differences here between descending, ascending, and transitional rhythms would seem to indicate a pleasing variety in the resolutions of Homer's line. This is the opposite of Knox's imposed regularity (which may reflect a habituation to the ethos and the accentual pattern of the Latin version of the hexameter). In general, the motion from disagreement to agreement in Greek verse cannot be characterized simply as one from variety to sameness. One should also note that we are dealing here not just with an error, but with the romanticization of an error. How many students will be drawn to Homer with the promise of a wandering course to a fixed end, in a rhythmic microcosm? So also, following another star, have scholars been drawn to the romantic anonymity of an oral tradition and found themselves a Homer.

A safeguard against these academic siren songs is the text itself, if it is properly interpreted. We must no longer mistake the written text

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[22] See W. B. Stanford, *The Sound of Greek*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967, 31.

for the poem, the written word for the living word, the imitation for the reality. Greek texts, whether in metre or prose, ought to be seen for what they are: notational instructions for the production of sound by the voice. They are *musical scores.* (What is more, there is a literal sense in which metrical texts could be understood to be *choreography*: there is instruction there for both voice and foot.) The separation of words and the addition of accent marks in Alexandrian times (or perhaps earlier—see Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations* 177b) can be seen as refinements on these instructions, intended, perhaps, for the benefit of non-native speakers. The comparison with musical notation involves some compelling corollaries. Today's audience for the music of tonal harmony is highly sophisticated; listeners will respond to the subtlest rhythmic and harmonic gestures of a composer. A modern audience knows tunes and whole pieces to the point that the performance of a wrong note would be catastrophic. Such precision of memory is rarer with words, even in metrical poetry. Music insinuates its patterns in ways that words cannot. Not just its movies, but the life of a modern audience may be said to have a soundtrack. Yet this audience is almost completely illiterate; the vast majority could not usefully read a piece of music, and still less could compose in the tonal language. We have literate composers and performers, illiterate listeners, and yet one shared level of sophistication in language, genre, and knowledge of the 'literature'. The history of modern tonal music is therefore the history of an 'oral literature'.

It has been suggested before that Phoenician letters were imported into Greece to write down Homer; I think it likely that the poets themselves had a significant and peculiar interest in a phonetic notation for their aural compositions.[23] The Mycenaean syllabary was inadequate for this purpose. It should be remembered that the examples of Phoenician letters that Herodotus had seen were all used to preserve hexameters—Herodotus seems to stress the metre—in dedicatory epigrams that had survived since the time of the descendants of Cadmus (5.58–9). The sequence of letters was a reminder of the stream of sound, in which the words were preserved; the accents

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[23] See Barry B. Powell, *Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, 185–6 and *passim.*

of the words were known to native speakers, and so the harmony was preserved; and the syllabic quantities preserved the rhythmic feet. The written text was for the poet an extremely efficient recording that served to recall his words, his harmony, and his choreography. (There was the possibility of confusion for other readers of the written version before the assignation of accent marks; mistakes that arose out of the identity of certain words in their written form, which were different words when pronounced, comprise a category of fallacy in Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations.*) It must be stressed that on this model of writing as a professional notation, the literacy of the poets (as also the literacy of modern musical composers) has no implications for the literacy of their communities, and no necessary implications for the 'literary' nature of their genres.

Literateness and literacy are synonymous with the ethos of classics. It is only if one sees the written text of Homer as identical with the narrative, or even as a version of the narrative, that one might view the repetition of phrases as problematic; that one might view the recurrence of phrases as repetition at all. Natives of literate cultures are conditioned by the conveniences of silent reading; writers need not repeat themselves: what can be re-read, need not be re-said. Aristotle speaks for all literate culture when he says that some of the qualities of effective oratory, such as repetitions and asyndeta, look amateurish as written speech (literally, when 'in the hands', ἰδιωτικοὶ ἐν ταῖς χερσίν, *Rhetoric* 1413[b]16). But for oral, or more strictly, aural cultures, words are more likely to be perceived as sensible, musical phenomena. To name something is not simply to employ its sign, but also to sing its melody, and melodies when sung take on an aesthetic life of their own. They can recur, but they can never simply be repeated. While repetition in a written text is profoundly meaningless, almost the very type of meaninglessness, singers and composers (and orators, in their fashion) have always understood the musical cogency of echoing and repetition; that in the semantic purity of music, repetition is the principal way to *create* context and meaning. Living speech is a musical phenomenon: and one would as soon explain repetition in music, as wetness in water.

It is therefore remarkable that Homer's memorable phrases, echoes of the Muse that etch themselves in the rapt consciousness—the

poetic inheritance and legacy of Greece—have been interpreted as mnemonic place-holders for an improvising oral bard. The members of an oral culture are supposed to have measurably better memories than the literate type of native, who is used to writing's crutch; they are the last people in the world, as poets *or* listeners, to stand in need of *aides de mémoire*. (When Aristotle refers to contemporary mnemonic techniques, he speaks of imaginative picture-making, εἰδωλοποιοῦντες, *De Anima* 427[b]20; there is no ancient witness for the notion of a 'traditional formula' in either the composition or the reception of Homeric poetry.) When we sift the extant evidence and perform our analysis of the dance to which the ἔπος was originally sung, we shall see why Homer, Hesiod, and the other early hexameter poets composed their lines in phrases of certain lengths, roughly determined by the dynamic pause called the caesura and the peculiar diaeresis near line end. The recurrence of these phrases in their poetry can be understood as a response to the pervasive ambience of the round dance, and as a natural outgrowth of the musical quality of the phrases themselves. We shall have explained the peculiarities of Homer's verse through its genesis in the choral medium, and through the musical nature of the Greek language: why there is a tendency toward phrases of a certain length, and why these phrases are repeated. Explanations of these phenomena on other grounds shall thereafter be redundant.

For the better part of a century, Parry's theory of Homeric composition has influenced many fields of study. Its elegance as an example of theory construction speaks for itself. The modern study of oral traditions owes its impetus, in some measure, to Parry's work. In the context of Homer himself, however, it shall be shown to be redundant. The phenomena Parry's theory seeks to explain can be better explained on different comparative ground, in a way that is solidly based in ancient testimony.

It is not impossible that prior to or contemporaneous with the composition of Homer's poems there was a practice of extemporaneous singing by bards in relation to a round dance beat. Rap music provides a modern analogue, where a culture of street improvisation came to develop canons and a 'literature'. George Hart suggests a similar process in Tamil *cankam* poetry:

The orality of the *Puṟunāṉūṟu* has been controversial. Kailasapathy suggested that since the *Puṟunāṉūṟu* has formulas and themes that, according to Parry and Lord, characterize oral literature, it must be oral. I responded that the text is often far too complex to have been extemporized—the chief require-ment for oral poetry—and that it must therefore have been written down as an imitation of truly oral poetry. This explanation fits the fact that the poems of the *Puṟunāṉūṟu* were composed by high-caste Pulavaṉs, or 'poets', but that the material was clearly extemporized orally by bards and drummers.[24]

That Homer as well was consciously imitating the forms of an oral folk tradition is entirely plausible, but the possibility of this scenario in his case is neither here nor there: for once we have made the right comparison, the alleged *textual* evidence for such a scenario disap-pears. My comparison does not generate 'formulas' in Homer's text at all, let alone the alleged 'economy' and 'extension' of such linguis-tic units. Instead it accounts directly for the appearance of the circling and musical phenomenon of recurrent phrases and passages, in an otherwise linear medium of narrative. Of course there has never been historical evidence to connect Homer's poems, or any of the bards he actually depicts, to any sort of extemporized oral tradition.

It is simply a mystery how twentieth-century scholars, who are the inheritors of perhaps the greatest of all musical traditions, that of the modern West, should have become so transfixed by repetition in the unambiguously musical medium of Homer's verse. The ancient world seems not to have noticed that Homer was repetitive. Many modern readers, for their part, seem to find the song-like recurrence, even in translation, to be one of the most pleasing features of Homer's style as a storyteller. In a passage discussing the rhetorical effects of repetition, Aristotle only mentions Homer to observe the repetition of the name of the otherwise obscure Nireus, three times at the beginning of successive lines in the *Iliad* (*Rhetoric* 1414[a]; *Iliad* 2.671–3). Aristotle is bemused by what is in his view a poet's con-scious use of a powerful auditory effect to memorialize a man whom he never mentions again. We should mark the fact that it is only in these lines that Aristotle anywhere actually *hears* and responds to

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[24] George L. Hart and Hank Heifetz, tr. and ed., *The Four Hundred Songs of War and Wisdom*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1999, p. xxiii.

repetition in Homer; and the fact that he chooses a passage out of the Catalogue of Ships, where, from the perspective of the written text, there is formulaic repetition all around. Clearly, Homer knew how to sound like he was repeating himself; and he did not sound like he was doing this when he used recurrent combinations of names and epithets.

Modern opera audiences are familiar with signature lines. These are distinctive melodies that serve to identify and to evoke the different characters in the play; they are a seemingly spontaneous compositional reflex in the modern development of the musical representation of drama. The epithet and name combinations in Homer also represent such a reflex, in musical narration. Πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς ('swift-footed Achilles') and πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς ('quick-witted Odysseus') are nothing else than signature lines, melodic and rhythmic evocations of the protagonists that serve to bring them to the foreground in the course of the narrative. More generally in Homer, a noun can be seen as the minimal form of a signature melody, which becomes fully realized and evocative of its object when sung out with its epithets. This melodic aspect of signification is, in my view, the substantial musical basis for Paolo Vivante's brilliant theories of the aesthetic effects of the epithet.[25] Again, the finished aesthetic effect will be seen to be rooted in the choral, musical rendition of the word.

Plato describes one whole species of dance as 'imitating the speech (λέξις) of the Muse' (*Laws* 795d–e; we shall draw on this passage later). This must mean that such a λέξις had a rhythm and phrase structure which manifestly and sensibly corresponds to the rhythm and divisions of the dance of the Muses. The formulaic building blocks around the central cadence (or caesura) will come to be understood in this study in terms of the reality they take on in performance: they are in fact dance phrases, elements of a musical composition, sometimes signature lines or summoning names, harbouring the power to evoke the presence of their objects or subjects with their music in the procession of the round.

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[25] Paolo Vivante, *The Epithets in Homer: A Study in Poetic Values*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982, *passim*.

Let us turn to the Greek accent—to the voice of the dancer—and then to our analysis of Homer's dance, the dance of the Muses. We shall prepare a way to understand the transformative act of Homeric composition ($\pi o\iota\eta\sigma\iota s$). Analysts and Unitarians were dismantlers and aesthetes. Oral theory was constructive, but largely anaesthetic. We hope to offer a poetics, by contrast, that connects a concrete way of making to an integrated and districtive aesthetic. (We may also even hope in this way to account, in some measure, for the schizophrenia in the modern critical response; see Chapter 6, especially section C.) We shall never again ask, why had Homer to construct a narrative out of repeated formulae; we now must ask how, in the context of a choral medium, with its hypnotic orchestic rhythm, its ambience of ritual circularity, did Homer manage to tell a sequential story at all? How did the constraints of this medium, more naturally suited, perhaps, to the catalogue form, become in Homer's hands the strengths of an immortal storyteller? *This* is the Homeric question.

3

The Voice of the Dancer: A New Theory of the Greek Accent

A fresh interpretation of the words ὀξύς and βαρύς is the basis for a new theory of the Greek accentual system, a theory that promises new vistas for the study and the performance of ancient texts. Knowledge of the relation between rhythm and harmony as the Ancients understood them can reawaken the Muse of Greek verse and the syncopation and cadence of her song. In contests, says Aristotle,[1] the actors have become more powerful than the poets, because they know the three elements of delivery (ὑπόκρισις): μέγεθος ἁρμονία ῥυθμός ('magnitude, harmony, rhythm'). To the first of these we latecomers have no access; modulation of volume will have to remain the province of a reader's imagination, and an actor's intent, as it does in English verse. But this new interpretation opens up a printed page of Greek so that the aural harmonies and rhythms of ancient prose and verse, which have always been embedded in the texts, may at last be recovered for analysis and restored to some part of their sensuality and vigour. The promise of the new theory of the accent is to render ancient texts as musical scores, open even today to the objectivity of harmonic analysis; and perhaps to discover the genuine rhythm and feel of Greek, so far that our texts may become scripts, we their actors, and the music of the ancient world sound in full voice.

The implications of the new theory for Greek may lead ultimately to a new account of Latin prosody as well. I shall present the

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[1] *Rhetoric* 1403ᵇ31 ff.

argument in the order of its discovery, but the significance of my study for students of the Latin language and of the performance of Latin poetry deserves to be highlighted at the outset.

A. THE HISTORICAL PICTURE

Aristophanes of Byzantium is said to have invented the prototype of the written accentual system found in our texts. There are three signs in this system: acute (´), circumflex (ˆ), and grave (`). Words are classified in terms of accent according to the syllabic position of the first two signs: oxytone, paroxytone, and proparoxytone, as the acute occurs on the ultima, penult, or antepenult; perispomenon and properispomenon as the circumflex appears on the ultima or penult. There has also been passed down the descriptive term 'barytone', which one might expect to be contrasted in some way with 'oxytone', and to refer in some way to words containing the grave accent; but which serves instead to denote any word with no type of accent mark on the ultima. In the tradition, therefore, paroxytones, proparoxytones, and properispomena are also for some reason called 'barytones'.

No part of this new approach will quarrel with the received phonetic interpretation of Aristophanes' signs: they are a perfectly economical way of marking the point in the vocalizing of an accented vowel at which the voice rose in pitch. This rising accent was described as ὀξύς, a term usually taken in prosodic or musical contexts to refer to high pitch. A βαρύς accent appears not to be marked, however; the grave sign we inherit does not indicate a distinct feature, but seems rather to signify some kind of suppression or modification of the ὀξύς accent in oxytone, non-prepausal words. Note that Aristophanes' circumflex also does not denote a structurally distinct phenomenon: it is simply a way to mark the rising pitch as occurring on the first mora of a long vowel or diphthong, where the simple acute in such a case would mark the onset of rising pitch on the second mora. (A mora is a conventional element of vowel measurement, two of which are in a long vowel or diphthong, one in a short.) It is therefore apparent that despite the three kinds of accent mark, the five types of

word classified according to the written location of these marks, and the presence of a further traditional term 'barytone' (a term which seems to imply at least a second opposition), the system of Aristophanes actually only depends upon a single feature—high or rising pitch—and its presence or absence in a given mora. For this reason it is incomplete, as we shall see below.

As to whether the first mora accent involved a recognizably unique sound, the evidence is difficult to weigh. Plato and Aristotle did not know of a third accent called circumflex; they both refer to ὀξύς and βαρύς, while Aristotle also mentions a μέσος and Plato a ὁμότονον,[2] which despite disagreement about its true nature, was clearly not what came to be called circumflex (i.e. a combination of the other two). The circumflex's alternative names among the grammarians (such as δίτονος, ὀξύβαρυς) imply that it registered as a discrete conjunction of the other two and not as some new hybrid. Perhaps, then, as early a commentator as Dionysius Thrax may have been wrongly interpreting Aristophanes' choice of a distinctive sign as an indication of a distinctive feature—for which, after all, no name had come down from classical times, and which was referred to by its written shape (περισπωμένη) and not its aural quality.

On the other hand, the way that Dionysius describes the sound with which the circumflex is pronounced, κατὰ περίκλασιν 'by breaking round', has an ancient pedigree. Glaucus of Samos, who is mentioned in Plato, and whose opinions we have through Varro through Sergius (?),[3] attests to no less than six different voice modulations, the last three of which (κεκλασμένη, <ἀνακλωμένη, ἀντανακλωμένη 'broken, bent, reflected') Sergius (?) takes as describing three species of circumflex. Clearly, some kind of voice modulation characterized by 'breaking' (κλάω) is envisioned. J. P. Postgate has suggested that these three species correspond to the pitch patterns in, respectively, πᾶν (páàn), Πάν (Pàán) and ναῦς (nàáùs— he compares ναός, νηῦς).[4] The last two examples, however, assume

[2] See e.g. Plato's *Cratylus* 399a, *Timaeus* 67b, *Philebus* 17c; Aristotle's *Rhetoric* 1403[b]29, *Poetics* 1456[b]33.

[3] See E. H. Sturtevant, *The Pronunciation of Greek and Latin*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1920, 199–201.

[4] J. P. Postgate, *A Short Guide to the Accentuation of Ancient Greek*, London: University of Liverpool and Hodder and Stoughton, 1924, 14–15.

without warrant a down-glide rather than level pitch on the un-accented first mora of the vowel or diphthong. Perhaps, instead, the 'bent' and 'reflected' species refer to accentual shapes in enclitic environments, where the attested doubling of word-level accent can produce sharp turns in the sense of the pitch on adjacent syllables (for example, δῶρόν τι, ἔλαβέ τις).

Glaucus' first three species are ἀνειμένη 'relaxed' (describing the βαρύς), μέση 'middle', and ἐπιτεταμένη 'tensed' (describing the ὀξύς). There is reason to believe that μέση meant 'level' here: since all the other words suggest motion (i.e. change of pitch), the contrast with level pitch would be more to the point than with 'middle' pitch; further, Sergius (?) cites Athenodorus as calling a certain accent μονότονος 'single pitch', which he then identifies as the μέση. The emphasis is therefore on the levelness of tone and not on the mid-dleness of relative pitch.

Some two millennia after this Sidney Allen has afforded us an analysis of the Greek tonal phenomena based on the analogous Vedic. Of particular importance is his recognition of the place of the *svarita* in ancient Greek: this was an automatic levelling of the voice from high to low, a down-glide, that followed the initially accented syl-lable, a feature described by ancient Indian phoneticians.[5] On his reading, ὀξύς and βαρύς meant high and low respectively, and the Greeks did not explicitly recognize the down-glide. But he argues from its automatic nature that the *svarita* is merely a structural variant on the low pitch, just indeed as the Indians saw it, and the fact 'that it is not specially indicated in Greek does not rule out the likelihood of its existence in this language also'. He goes on to cite the evidence of musical fragments. The circumflex thus becomes ὀξύς plus *svarita* in one syllable; again by comparing with the Vedic, Allen draws the following conclusion about its sound:

Phonetically the two elements probably fused, so that the 'compound' accent was probably identical with the falling glide which occurred on a long vowel or diphthong in the syllable following a high pitch, and the Indian writers use the same term *svarita* for both (cf. also the musical treatment of λυποῦ, ζῆν, ἀπαιτεῖ in the Aidin inscription).[6]

[5] W. Sidney Allen, *Vox Graeca*, 3rd edn., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987, 121.
[6] Ibid. 122.

In all fairness, however, the inscription does not quite bear him out. In Allen's transcription,[7] the circumflected syllables bear a grace note before the down-glide that the merely post-acute syllables do not, and in two cases ($\lambda\upsilon\pi o\hat{\upsilon}$ and $\zeta\hat{\eta}\nu$), the melodic descent is not a glide but a drop of two whole tones. Together these may be taken, with obvious dependence on the modern transcriber's methods, as a musical hint of the 'break' in the voice that some of the grammarians saw as uniquely characteristic of the sound of the circumflex. (Egert Pöhlmann's text does not show grace notes, but in the two cases mentioned the high tone still has half the time value of the low tone.[8]) The question of the phonetic similarity of the compound accent (circumflex) and the simple down-glide (the unmarked, post-acute *svarita*), ought therefore to be left open.

Once granted, the *svarita* allows Allen a felicitous formulation that includes the peculiarly Greek restrictions (absent in the Vedic) placed upon the location of the accent:

the Greek accent may be considered essentially as a 'contonation', comprising the high pitch and the falling pitch which immediately follows it; this contonation may be either monosyllabic (in the case of the compound accent) or disyllabic; but in either case *not more than one vowel-mora* (= short vowel) *may follow the contonation.*[9]

Allen graciously credits C. Lancelot, a seventeenth-century Frenchman, for spotting the essentials of this formula, as well as other parts of his own theory, in Lancelot's *Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre facilement la langue grecque* (1655).

We may well ask how the economy of this 'contonation' escaped the analysis of ancient thinkers and grammarians while it graces that of modern philology? The answer is that the contonation was not described directly in the ancient world, even though the fact of its presence is indicated by the conscious apprehension of its peculiar elements. The point of departure for the new theory is to identify the *svarita*, the automatic post-acute down-glide, with the feature the Greeks called $\beta\alpha\rho\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$, and to recognize that this $\beta\alpha\rho\acute{\upsilon}\varsigma$

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[7] Ibid. 119.

[8] Egert Pöhlmann, *Denkmäler Altgriechischer Musik*, Nürnberg: Verlag Hans Carl, 1970, 55; see also Pöhlmann and West, *Documents of Ancient Greek Music*, 88–9.

[9] Allen, *Vox Graeca*, 124.

was apprehended by them as a positive accent in its own right. The rise and the fall in pitch over the contonation came to be perceived by the Greeks as two different kinds of accent, ὀξύς and βαρύς, not accent and automatic down-glide, as in Vedic, and certainly not accent and lack of accent, as in the prevailing high pitch/low pitch interpretation of these words. (In a recent treatment we find: 'βαρύς means "unaccented" phonologically and "Low toned", as opposed to Mid toned, phonetically.'[10]) Certain words came to be characterized as more one than the other, as a passage from Dionysius of Halicarnassus will later indicate. The art of ἁρμονία as it applied to speech would therefore have consisted in joining together words characterized by the ὀξύς and βαρύς—two kinds of thing, not opposites—in euphonious rhythm. This could be seen as an aesthetic re-joining, at the level of the line and phrase, of what is in its nature a fractured contonation within and between syllables.

One must first recognize that the terms ὀξύς and βαρύς are not negatives of each other: their opposition is temporal and qualitative, which is why harmonizing them produces something rhythmic and euphonic, and not something neutral. The opposite of ὀξύς ('sharp', 'coming to a point') is ἀμβλύς ('blunt', 'dull'): these words are opposed both literally and figuratively (see e.g. Plato's *Republic* 596a, *Theaetetus* 165d), while the opposite of βαρύς ('heavy', 'tending to fall') is κοῦφος ('light', see *Republic* 438c). Ὀξύς is not literally 'high', but 'sharply rising'; βαρύς is not 'low', but 'heavily falling'. The adjectives of themselves indicate the curious situation in Greek of a contonation heard and appreciated in the separation of its adjacent parts. It is certainly remarkable that an interpretation of Greek prosody that had a word meaning 'heavy' apply to a syllable that was unaccented, could have survived any scrutiny, let alone a bimillennial tradition.

The strictly musical usage, however, where ὀξύς and βαρύς describe high and low regions or 'pitches' in the scale, is old and must be accounted for; its development can be traced first from the application to tuning strings:

τάσις or τόνος (lit. 'stretching') may be taken to derive their meaning from the string-tension whereby the pitch of a musical instrument is varied, the

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[10] Devine and Stephens, *The Prosody of Greek Speech*, 172.

'sharp' accent being commonly associated with ἐπίτασις 'tightening', and the 'heavy' with ἄνεσις 'slackening'—terms which are in fact also applied to stringed instruments (e.g. Plato, *Rep.* 349e).[11]

Following on this, the terms came to cover the *result* of tensing or relaxing a stretched string, the fixed pitch at the end, rather than the tonal glide during tuning. In Plato's *Phaedrus*,[12] Socrates says a truly musical man would not rebuke someone harshly who thought he was a ἁρμονικός just because he knew how to make the 'most ὀξύς' and 'most βαρύς' string. The *Republic* passage cited by Allen implies that the skill of a μουσικός consisted in accurately tuning the lyre by stretching and slackening strings; thus the most sharp string is the most tightened, the most heavy is the most loosened or fallen. Socrates suggests that knowing how to set these two strings is only the necessary preliminary to harmony, presumably because the pitches they produce when most tightened and most slack serve as proportional extremes, of melodic high and low, to the pitches produced by the intermediately tightened strings in any particular mode.

 Pitches in general were denoted by the periphrasis ὅροι τῶν διαστημάτων, or 'boundary marks of the intervals',[13] while their individual names came from the position on the lyre of the respective strings that produced them, for example νεάτη ὑπάτη μέση (low, high, and middle). Plato's phrase, ὅροι νεάτης τε καὶ ὑπάτης καὶ μέσης (*Republic* 443d), should be retained with genitives, for it shows the origin of Aristoxenus' and the later harmonicists' technical terms: the notes of a harmonized lyre (compared by Socrates to a just soul) are the boundary points, single pitches at the extremes of continuous intervals, that sound *from* the low, high, and middle strings. We have a notion here as to why the modern metaphor of spatial opposites (high and low) was precluded for the Greeks from musical description: the high string on the lyre, which gave the name 'high' (ὑπάτη) to its note, produced the lowest tone (i.e. the βαρύτατος ὅρος). To describe the notes themselves as high or low would have introduced a terminological confusion at the very least, whether or not the metaphor could

[11] Allen, *Vox Graeca*, 116.
[12] 268d ff.
[13] See Aristoxenus, *Harmonics* 1. 49; Plato, *Philebus* 17d.

otherwise have suited the Greeks. It is easy enough to see how ὀξύς and βαρύς, originally suggesting the sharp and falling modulations of speech, were also deployed to describe the sounds of tightening and slackening strings—that is, the sound of moving through an interval. Then they came to stand for the result of tuning—the limit of an interval—what we now call high or low pitch.

In confirmation of these speculations we find in Aristoxenus' *Harmonics* what is likely to be the precise point and passage where the words ὀξύς and βαρύς were first applied to fixed instead of changing pitch. Here is Henry Macran's translation, with Greek added for clarity:

Tension (ἐπίτασις) is the continuous transition of the voice from a lower position (ἐκ βαρυτέρου τόπου) to a higher (εἰς ὀξύτερον), *relaxation* (ἄνεσις) that from a higher to a lower. *Height of pitch* (ὀξύτης) is the result of tension (διὰ τῆς ἐπιτάσεως), *depth* (βαρύτης) the result of relaxation (διὰ τῆς ἀνέσεως). On a superficial consideration of these questions it might appear surprising that we distinguish four phenomena here instead of two, and in fact it is usual to identify height of pitch with tension, and depth with relaxation. Hence we may perhaps with advantage observe that the usual view implies a confusion of thought. In doing so we must endeavour to understand, by observing the phenomenon itself, what precisely takes place when in tuning we tighten a string or relax it. All who possess even a slight acquaintance with instruments are aware that in producing tension we raise the string to a higher pitch, and that in relaxing it we lower a pitch. Now, while we are thus raising the pitch of the string, it is obvious that the height of pitch which is to result from the process cannot yet be in existence. Height of pitch will only result when the string becomes stationary and ceases to change, after having been brought by the process of tension to the point of pitch required; in other words when the tension has ceased and no longer exists. For it is impossible that a string should be at the same moment in motion and at rest; and as we have seen, tension takes place when the string is in motion, height of pitch when it is quiescent and stationary. The same remarks will apply to relaxation and depth of pitch, except that these are concerned with change in the opposite direction and its result. It is evident, then, that relaxation and depth of pitch, tension and height of pitch, must not be identified, but stand to one another in the relation of cause and effect.[14]

[14] Aristoxenus, *Harmonics* 1. 10–11.

Note that Aristoxenus is consciously innovating when he distinguishes between ὀξύτης–βαρύτης and tightening–relaxing as stationary versus moving pitches. He does this in part to be true to the facts of tuning, but also to produce a set of terms that suits Aristotle's stricture of non-contradiction: a string cannot be in motion and rest at the same time (*pace* Heraclitus).[15] Hence ὀξύς and βαρύς take on their new colours.

While Aristoxenus (fourth century BCE) had distinguished between continuous change (συνεχής) in the voice tone and change by intervals (διαστηματική), the former being characteristic of speaking and the latter of singing,[16] Dionysius of Halicarnassus (first century BCE) appears to apply the descriptive terms of song to the phenomena of speech; he speaks of the 'melody of speech', and of its being measured by a musical interval (the fifth). τὸ ὀξύ and τὸ βαρύ are 'tone regions' or pitches *to* which the voice respectively rises or lowers while pronouncing syllables, rather than characteristics of the rising and lowering themselves.[17] While the information he gives about the size of the supposed speech interval might seem useful as descriptive data, his ignorance of the original meaning of ὀξύς and βαρύς as it applied to speech leads to inconsistencies in his account. It may even discredit the descriptive insight, at least as far as it applied to classical practice. I shall discuss the incoherencies in due course. The old notion, meanwhile, of sharp and heavy accents characterized by raising and lowering, is still preserved in the Thracian Dionysius (second century BCE), whom we see emerging as a transitional figure:

τόνος ἐστὶ φωνῆς ἀπήχησις ἐναρμονίου, ἡ κατὰ ἀνάτασιν ἐν τῇ ὀξείᾳ, ἡ κατὰ ὁμαλισμὸν ἐν τῇ βαρείᾳ, ἡ κατὰ περίκλασιν ἐν τῇ περισπωμένῃ.

Accent is a sounding of the tuned voice, by tightening upward in the sharp one, by levelling in the heavy one, by breaking round in the bent-over one.[18]

What precise phenomenon Dionysius means to denote by the circumflex (the 'bent-over one') it is hard to say. Evidently he is used to the graphic sign for the phenomenon. But we can be gratified by his

[15] See Plato, *Symposium* 187a.
[16] Aristoxenus, *Harmonics*, 1.8 ff.
[17] See Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *De Compositione Verborum* 40.17 ff.
[18] Dionysius Thrax, *Τέχνη Γραμματική* 6.15–7.2.

use of ἀνάτασις and ὁμαλισμός, both conveying kinds of movement and not fixed pitch; in particular his use of 'levelling' must be seen to corroborate my identification of the βαρύς with the Vedic *svarita*. Its emphasis in Greek, however, as a separate feature, must be marked as something new under the Indo-European sun.

To begin to see the importance of this emphasis, we first must show that the Greeks saw individual words as characterized by either the ὀξύς, the βαρύς, or by both accents. This would imply that something about Greek syllable relations drew out one or the other aspect of the contonation in particular contexts. The following passage from Dionysius of Halicarnassus begins by making such a threefold distinction among Greek words; it then also serves to point up the incoherencies that follow upon interpreting ὀξύς and βαρύς exclusively as high and low pitch. Here it is with Allen's translation:

οὐ μὴν ἅπασα λέξις ἡ καθ᾽ ἓν μόριον λόγου τατταμένη ἐπὶ τῆς αὐτῆς λέγεται τάσεως, ἀλλ᾽ ἡ μὲν ἐπὶ τῆς ὀξείας, ἡ δ᾽ ἐπὶ τῆς βαρείας, ἡ δ᾽ ἐπ᾽ ἀμφοῖν. τῶν δὲ ἀμφοτέρας τὰς τάσεις ἐχουσῶν αἱ μὲν κατὰ μίαν συλλαβὴν συνεφθαρμένον ἔχουσι τῷ ὀξεῖ τὸ βαρύ, ἃς δὴ περισπωμένας καλοῦμεν· αἱ δὲ ἐν ἑτέρᾳ τε καὶ ἑτέρᾳ χωρὶς ἑκάτερον ἐφ᾽ ἑαυτοῦ τὴν οἰκείαν φυλάττον φύσιν. καὶ ταῖς μὲν δισυλλάβοις οὐδὲν τὸ διὰ μέσου χωρίον βαρύτητός τε καὶ ὀξύτητος· ταῖς δὲ πολυσυλλάβοις, ἡλίκαι ποτ᾽ ἂν ὦσιν, ἡ τὸν ὀξὺν τόνον ἔχουσα μία ἐν πολλαῖς ταῖς ἄλλαις βαρείαις ἔνεστιν.

Of course, not every word is spoken with the same pitch-pattern, but one on the high pitch, another on the low, and another on both. Of those which have both, some have the low combined with the high in one syllable, and these we call circumflex; whereas others have each of them on different syllables and maintaining their own quality. In disyllables there is no intermediate position between low and high; but in polysyllables, of whatever length, there is a single syllable containing the high pitch amongst a plurality of low pitches.[19]

Allen is surely right in taking λέξις ἡ καθ᾽ ἓν μόριον λόγου τατταμένη as a periphrasis for 'word', its diction recalling the Thracian Dionysius' original definition of that complex phenomenon. Sturtevant's rendering, 'the entire utterance during one word',[20] implies that each word has all the accents, which is directly contradicted by the rest of

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[19] Dion. Hal. *Comp.* 40.17 ff.
[20] Sturtevant, *The Pronunciation of Greek and Latin*, 194.

the sentence. The internal contradictions in Dionysius' account are more subtle than that. As I read the passage, the first statement is one of received truth (thus the formal periphrasis); this is the point of the μήν—each word has long since been known to have been spoken with one accent, the other accent, or with both. The rest of the passage is an attempt to explain this fact. The failure of the attempt may be discovered by a simple question: what sort of word is pronounced ἐπὶ βαρείας, with the heavy accent? By Dionysius' admission, disyllables and polysyllables carry both accents (or pitches, as he conceives them). Did the first two categories in the received statement (ἐπὶ τῆς ὀξείας, ἐπὶ τῆς βαρείας) mean to distinguish only between monosyllables? And did the scholar who said it mean by the second category to exalt the class of unaccented (low-pitch) monosyllables? The explanation that there was one high or highest pitch per word, which may actually have been the case in a musical setting of verse, does not make sense of, or shed light on, the distinction made in the first statement, that there are three kinds of word defined by the permutations of two accents; that statement was included of necessity as received knowledge, but Dionysius for one reason or another was inadequate to gloss it without recourse to a tradition of the musical settings of speech. By the time of Dionysius, the extended *musical* meaning of ὀξύς and βαρύς, high and low pitch, would seem to have been the only one available, and he had therefore to apply it in an attempt to make sense of the received terms for the accents of *speech.* A legacy of Dionysius' inadequacy is the descriptive pointlessness of the term 'barytone', which has been dutifully preserved in the grammars.[21]

How, then, might a word's contonation have come sometimes to sound ὀξύς, sometimes βαρύς, and sometimes both? (Note that the last category did *not* necessarily refer to the circumflex, as even Dionysius of Halicarnassus feels he must qualify it to cover this phenomenon; if Allen is right the circumflex would be phonetically identical with the *svarita*.) It turns out that the presence of the *svarita* as a source of prominence does in fact produce three different types of word. The key to this problem is quantity, which in Greek was an

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[21] See e.g. H. W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1920, 38.

independent variable. Depending on which combination of longs and shorts the contonation fell upon, different effects would have resulted. If the down-glide fell on a long vowel, for example, it would have occupied the whole of it (as in Vedic), whereas the preceding acute only occupied one mora. The length of the down-glide would therefore have brought it into prominence in relation to the rise, and such words as ἄνθρωπος, ἤβῃ, and λέγὼ were βαρύς, accent on the second syllable. On the basis of the analogy with Vedic, circumflected vowels containing the whole of the contonation's rise and fall were dominated phonetically by the down-glide. Hence circumflected words were also βαρύς, with accent on the same syllable as the sign: δῶρον, ζῆν. (Recall that Plato and Aristotle did not recognize the circumflex as a distinct accent.) It is likely that if the vowel following an acute was long by position—that is to say, if the acute was followed by a closed syllable—this would also have made the contonation sound βαρύς on that syllable, though to a degree that might have depended on the sonorant quality of the surrounding consonants. The possibility that in some contexts these distinctions of perceived prosodic quality were relative rather than absolute may be indicated by the frequent use of comparatives rather than positives to describe the accents (see e.g. Plato's *Cratylus* 399b).

If the following syllable were short, however, it probably could not have taken the glide. The result would have been a step-wise descent from the ὀξύς, thereby emphasizing the ὀξύς ('sharp') as such: it rose to a point and broke off. Words like σοφώτατος, βουλόμενος, μάχομαι, δέκατος, ἤκομεν would have fitted this category; all are ὀξύς on the antepenult. Despite the sonorant in some of the immediately following syllables, quickness of pronunciation (brought on by the vowel quantities) would have de-emphasized the *svarita*. The resulting effect would have been a sharp stress on the acutely accented syllable.

All so-called oxytone words (i.e. with the acute on the ultima) were somewhat suppressed on the accented syllable, except before pauses and enclitics, if we accept the testimony of the grave sign (Allen's argument for this depends on the fact that the contonation could not cross word boundaries in Greek).[22] In the world of Greek

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[22] See W. S. Allen, *Accent and Rhythm*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973, 244 ff., esp. 246–7.

accentuation, what goes up, must come down; but unlike in Vedic, if the voice cannot come down within the borders of a word, it is not allowed to go up. Musical settings, however, such as the 'Song of Seikilos' in the Aydin inscription, sometimes indicate a slight rise in pitch at these locations.

Pauses and enclitics, even when the latter are elided, apparently released this ὀξύς completely, and indeed, this must be seen as the most important way that pauses and enclitics each added emphasis to their neighbouring words (their own presence or silence is of course another). The elided enclitic was apparently a convention in verse, because of its prosodic efficacy: a metrical poet can thereby release prosodic emphasis in the words to which an enclitic is attached, without even costing himself a syllable. If the marking of an acute on the ultima rather than a grave before a pause was a reflection of actual performance practice, the released ὀξύς in such a case must have been a significant aural mark of a period in sense. Long enclitics (e.g. που, μοι) would meanwhile complete the contonation of oxytone words, and so at times receive the weight of the βαρύς, and hence also a certain emphasis in context. It is worth noting that attempts at synchronic accounts of ancient Greek accentuation in enclitic environments, while succeeding elsewhere, have foundered on these monosyllabic enclitics: 'it is not clear on this (or any) account why monosyllabic enclitics are never accented.'[23] In the proposed account, the heavy monosyllabic enclitics are often accentually prominent (εἰπέ μοι may be read most naturally not as '*tell me*' but 'tell *me*'.)

Disyllables (both short), or in general any double-short paroxytones, are the primary candidates for the words that expressed both accents. Words like πόλις, λόγος, τόκος, are likely to have been pronounced in a 'balanced' way, up and down. Standing alone they are primarily ὀξύς as marked; but in context, any following pause may have helped to sound the *svarita* on the second syllable, while enclitics positively turned them into βαρύς words (λόγὸν γε, πόλὶς τε). The tendency towards the βαρύς may be indicated by the

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[23] Chris Golston, 'Floating H (and L*) Tones in Ancient Greek', in J. Myers and P. E. Pérez (eds.), *Arizona Phonology Conference, iii (1990)*, Tucson: University of Arizona Linguistics Department, 1990, 77.

historical contraction and circumflection in disyllables of this type which lacked an arresting consonant: νόος → νοῦς, φάος → φῶς. Also in this category would be polysyllables with a 'doubtful' penult, such as πτολίεθρον. An external factor like verse ictus could determine whether such a shape was rendered ὀξύς on the antepenult or βαρύς on the penult.

An intriguing case is presented by trochaic shapes with a short initial vowel, such as ἄνδρα, where the sonorant formants of -ν- would likely have carried the falling tone, so that this word is actually βαρύς with accent on the first syllable (in effect, ᾶνδρα). Secondary accent induced by an enclitic in the phrase ἄνδρά μοι, an early variant in editions of the *Odyssey* (1.1), indicates that the contonation in this case was completed in the first syllable. Perhaps, however, it is merely the closed nature of the initial syllable that allows for a completion of the contonation prior to the next vocalism, rather than the specifically sonorant quality of the consonant following the short vowel. In that case, examples such as ἄστρα, τόσσα would also be barytones on the penult, and not variable in context like the double-short paroxytones. The rule we should propose is that the contonation can begin and be completed not just within a long vowel, but also within a closed syllable with a short vowel, provided that there is not more than one mora following the completion (hence in words of a trochaic termination, e.g. ἑλόντες). Note that this is not a rule about closed syllables in general, but only closed syllables in this trochaic configuration. The antepenult of ἄνθρωπος is closed. Such a rule would provide, however, for both ἄνδρα and ἄνθρωπος being barytone on the penult. It would seem that the emphatic barytone occurs wherever it possibly can.

Such is the scheme, then: the ὀξύς accent is the acute, prominent when followed by a short syllable. The βαρύς accent is the *svarita*, prominent when falling on a long or pre-pausal syllable after the acute; on a circumflected vowel or diphthong; or within a penultimate closed syllable marked acute on a short vowel, when followed also by a short. The traditional word-level distinction between oxytone and barytone can now be made with some descriptive utility. In the tradition, this distinction has been understood to derive solely from the quality of a word's final syllable, so that the term 'barytone' functions as a kind of catch-all, overlapping with several of the

descriptive terms derived from the location of the written marks (e.g., proparoxytone, properispomenon). The new theory produces a new, exhaustive list of five possible prosodic shapes, specified by the relative prominence of ὀξύς or βαρύς. The list would include words that could be described as oxytone not only on the ultima, but also on the penult and the antepenult; and words that could be described as barytone on the ultima or the penult. (Note that the class of double-short, 'pyrrhic' paroxytones, in the traditional parlance, can be in context either oxytone on the penult *or* barytone on the ultima in the new parlance.) It must be remembered, however, that in barytone words, the ὀξύς never completely lost its force, at least as an anticipatory raising of the voice pitch. Aristophanes could otherwise never have been able to mark the accents as he did; he would not have distinguished, for example, between his circumflected vowels and post-acute long vowels, if the βαρύς had become the sole accentual feature of the words containing it. As if under the influence of Panini, Aristophanes marked up his words by analogy with the *udatta*, which denoted the syllable where the voice rose in a Sanskrit word. The descriptive acuity of this move may be seen to be demonstrated by the later development of Greek, where the syllable containing the ὀξύς-*udatta* marked by Aristophanes became the modern stressed syllable. Yet the confusion it caused in the interpretation of classical Greek prosody, where the βαρύς-*svarita* was still a prominent player, has not been resolved until now.

It can hardly be doubted that the role of poetry and the Muses' arts in Greek society—all that may be subsumed under the purview of Greek μουσική—was central and fundamental. The Muses presided over the arts of language, but they were dancers, and the role of dance must not be underestimated in the development of Greek language and prosody. In their state of rhythmic and semantic development, Homer's works may bear the same relation to the Phaeacian round dance as Mozart's to European dances of folk and court, or Chopin's mazurkas to their rustic originals; yet the musical and rhythmic patterning of the latter is in each of these instances crucial to the understanding, and even the enjoyment, of the former. Greek metres were dance measures. Their arsis and thesis belonged to dancers' feet. The linguistic, prosodic effects of this fact have never been properly considered.

Whereas in the case of the hexameter, as I shall later show, the measure came first, and the rhythm of the words originally kept time to the thud and pulse of dancing feet, in choral lyric there was no external measure; the longs and shorts that inhered in the words did of themselves supply the rhythm. As we have noted, external factors such as musical settings that altered natural word dynamics and rhythms were an innovation ascribed to Euripides. Though this is a commonplace, the implication for all poets before Euripides, with respect to whom the innovation was observed, has not been exploited. The music was in the words; lyres and flutes did not create but rather accompanied this music, and must at most have drawn out the inherent melodic and dynamic patterns of the speech; the dancer's feet were moved from within, by the texture and feel of the very words that came out of his mouth—no doubt a marvellous thing to behold. Since in a Greek chorus the dancer was also a singer, the accentual features of syllables must have had a direct relation to the rhythmic dance patterns of the poetic metres. The feet accompanied the voice, after all, and it is on the face of it absurd, for all that it has been noised abroad these many centuries, that uniquely in ancient Greek was there no connection whatsoever between accent and ictus, between the prosodic modifications of the voice and the arsis and thesis of the feet. In particular, as a matter of humanly practical performance, a connection must have existed between a long syllable with the heavy accent (a falling glide) and the thesis, the down-beat of the foot against the dance floor. This would be a connection between a heavy exhalation and a heavy step. We must therefore look for a direct relation between the ὀξύς and βαρύς accents and the shape of Greek metres; we note that the recognition of the βαρύς as a genuine and distinct element of ἁρμονία may have come from its power as tonic thesis, the linguistic feature around which Greek verse was composed and choreographed as reinforcement and counterpoint.

What dance requires is culmination, unless it is to be never-ending, and the desire for culminative reinforcement in dance poetry was historically paralleled by a development in the Greek accent. Vedic retained the free Indo-European accent, independent of word boundaries, but in Greek, Latin, and classical Sanskrit we see a prosodic location defined by word ending. The introduction of a

culminative function to the free accent is likely to have induced a change from a 'backward leaning' to a 'forward leaning' performance of the contonation; that is, from a contonation that was rendered as a high-pitch peak followed by an automatic down-glide (*udatta–svarita*), to one that was rendered as an anticipatory rise before a culminative heavy fall (ὀξύς–βαρύς). The anticipatory quality of the rise helps to explain the suppression of pitch rise on the ultima in Greek (indicated by the grave sign). If the rise itself were a culminative peak, it would have been able to perform an accentual function without the following down-glide. But Greek preferred to suppress the rise where the heavy fall was precluded—preferred to suppress accent altogether in a word—rather than culminate with a feature that had in non-final contexts become an anticipatory cue.

B. A MODERN CONFIRMATION

Proof of these contentions is to be had from Allen's study of stress in ancient Greek.[24] The reasoning behind the study went as follows:

Since Greek metrical patterns, unlike those of classical Latin, were, so far as we know, evolved specifically for Greek, it is likely that they represent, in Meillet's terms, 'a stylization or normalization of the natural rhythm of language'. So it is probable that any such patterns of metrical reinforcement would tend to agree rather than conflict with any similar patterns in speech. If this were so, then one might expect that particular syllabic word-patterns would tend to be placed in particular relationships to the strong/weak positions of the verse, even though their purely quantitative structure might qualify them for other placings. And conversely, if one were to discover a strong tendency of this type, it would suggest the presence, in both verse and speech, of some factor additional to quantity—whatever the nature of that factor might be.[25]

Allen chose as his database serious spoken verse, meaning epic hexameters and tragic iambics and trochaics, and studied only the ends of lines (sections following the main caesura, or the diaeresis in

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[24] See Allen, *Accent and Rhythm*, 274–334, and *Vox Graeca*, 131–9.
[25] Allen, *Vox Graeca*, 132.

trochaics, and excluding the 'doubtful' final position). The begin-
nings of these lines characteristically admit of more variation in the
metrical pattern. Allen is careful to justify these choices.[26] The study
generates a remarkable formula that neatly reveals the 'preponderant
tendencies' of correspondence between particular syllables and the
strong positions of feet; he claims that these tendencies 'approach
complete regularity'. We assume, as is reasonable, that if certain parts
of the quantitative structure of a word are favoured for the strong
positions of feet, then these parts (i.e. syllables) must have 'some
kind of inherent phonetic "prominence"'. The following rules are
deduced from the formula to describe the occurrence of this promin-
ence in ordinary Greek words (Allen adopts the phonological terms
'heavy' and 'light' to describe the syllable structures traditionally
called 'long' and 'short' in classics departments):

1. Prominence applies to an element constituted by either (a) one heavy
   syllable or (b) two light syllables.
2. Words (or word-like sequences) longer than an element have internal
   contrasts of prominence/non-prominence.
3. If the final syllable of a word is heavy it is prominent.
4. If the final syllable is light, the next preceding element is prominent.
5. A preceding element separated from the prominent element is also
   (secondarily) prominent.[27]

As to the nature of this prominence, Allen is obliged to rule out
both high pitch and length; on his understanding, the former belongs
to the accent, while the latter is an independent phonemic variable.
He concludes: 'of the three common prosodic parameters ... this
then leaves only the dynamic, i.e. stress.' Certain indicative facts
about Greek metrics are cited by Allen:[28] that 'the difference between
the invariable ("strong") part of the foot and the variable ("weak")
part, in all metres where the distinction applies, involves basically a
heavy syllable as the invariant' (as against biceps and anceps in the
weak part of the foot); and that 'a spondee may function both in a
"rising" [ascending] and in a "falling" [descending] verse pattern' (so
that in an all-spondaic line, there would be no rhythm without ictus

[26] Ibid. 133–4; *Accent and Rhythm*, 106.
[27] Allen, *Vox Graeca*, 135–6.
[28] Allen, *Accent and Rhythm*, 277–8.

of some kind). These are now seen to cohere in the notion of an integral stress pattern (prominence/non-prominence) in Greek words which corresponds at line end to the pattern of strong and weak parts of the various feet.

A. M. Devine and L. D. Stephens have described Allen's *Accent and Rhythm* as 'the first work in the field of Greek metre that can truly be said to understand the requirements of scientific method and theory construction'.[29] Yet for all its elegance, Allen's theory of word-level stress prominence has left Greek prosody in a highly, not to say completely, anomalous state. The problem lies in Allen's interpretation of the discovered syllable prominence as non-accentual stress. Word-level stress without an accentual function is apparently unexampled in the world's languages. At the same time, accentual stress independent of a word's accentual pitch—the only alternative interpretation of Allen's discovered prominence—would be an equally unique phenomenon. Consider the analysis of Devine and Stephens:

The rules of [Allen's] stress theory are quite definitely word-level rules, and in word-prosodic systems, where stress occurs, it either implements the word accent by itself or in conjunction with a pitch accent: but in the latter case, its location has not been found to be independent of that of the pitch accent in those languages so far examined. Thus word-level stress, unlike pitch, is never non-accentual. Consequently, to find typological support, stress theory would have to show that there are languages in which words have two independent 'accents', one pitch and one stress. While we know of no clear cases of such double accent systems, they are conceivable as unstable, transitional stages associated with the loss of lexical tone contrasts; cf. a language such as Luganda. Such types, however, provide no typological support for stress theory. Diachronically, Greek is moving from pitch to stress implementation of accent with the position of the accent remaining unchanged, so that a transitional stage with a double accent is precluded.[30]

Tradition has bequeathed us a system of pitch accents for Greek words; modern analysis has discovered a feature in the harmonizing of Greek words to metre that looks very much like a predictable stress pattern in those words, apparently independent of their pitch pattern.

[29] A. M. Devine and L. D. Stephens, *Language and Metre*, Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984, 26.
[30] Ibid. 30.

But a modern typological survey can find 'no clear cases' of languages with a double accent, and the presence of such a double accent, even as a transitional phenomenon, is in any case impossible to square with the known historical development of Greek. Devine and Stephens suggest a way out of the quandary:

The problem seems to lie in the choice of the term 'stress'. The hypothetical Greek stress does not have two important properties that are characteristically associated with what the typological literature identifies as stress, namely accentual function and correlation with a pitch accent if there is one.[31]

Yet it would seem that the problem lies more in the phenomena themselves than in any choice of terms. Allen has discovered a prosody for Greek in his word-level prominence that is ostensibly independent of the received prosody, with its word-level pitch accent, and which, moreover, is married naturally to the metrical structure of Greek verse in a way that has never been observed in the case of the received prosody. If we accept both the traditional and the modern accounts, Greek appears to have had two independent prosodies at once, a condition quite as impossible in performance as it is unexampled. But beyond the riddle of its independence, what is the actual nature of Allen's prominence, if non-accentual stress is ruled out? What did it sound like? A word-level prominence marked neither by quantity, by pitch, nor by stress, is a prosodic phantom.

It turns out, however, that the first four of Allen's prominence rules constitute the rules for locating either the ὀξύς or the βαρύς accent as I have explained them, in all classes of Greek word with the characteristic recessive pitch accent, as well as two other types (in the traditional nomenclature, long-final oxytones and perispomena). In all of these cases, the syllable primarily stressed according to Allen's rules is also the primarily accented syllable according to my theory, whether ὀξύς or βαρύς. The only exceptions to this correlation—the only cases in which the stress rules do not predict the location of the ὀξύς accent in an ὀξύς word, or the βαρύς accent in a βαρύς word— also involve exceptions to the recessive accent rule. The true nature of Allen's prominence is thus revealed. There appears to be a direct connection between the hypothetical stress and the traditional pitch

system. But the biggest prize may be reserved for students of Greek verse: we have found, for the first time, a link between accent and metre in Greek, through a study of what Allen calls the 'coda' of lines in Greek verse, where one might precisely have thought that accent would be likely to reinforce rather than stand in counterpoint or syncopation to the metre. The result could hardly be more gratifying. All that Allen lacked to see this was the notion that there might be two different kinds of prominence; he was well aware, for example, of the tendency for strong positions of the feet to correspond either with the circumflex or the post-acute down-glide (our βαρύς accent), and goes so far as to demonstrate the correspondence statistically.[32] He would then only need to recognize, with respect to the rules of prominence which he later derives, that where they did not locate the falling glide, they tended to locate the acute followed by a short syllable (our ὀξύς accent, with a de-emphasized *svarita*). Instead he dismissed the demonstrated correlation as 'probably only an incidental effect of the accentual rules, which in themselves are probably not based on any predilections regarding the incidence of falling pitch (but rather on limitations in terms of morae)'.[33] This despite his own formulation of the accent placement rule in terms of the contonation, where the incidence of falling pitch is critical.

At several points, the rules of stress theory do not correspond with the new account of the accent. The new account has little immediately to say, for example, about secondary stress (rule 5), except that it seems to have nothing to do with the system of pitch marks. Perhaps it is a phantom. But it may indicate that longer words could have had more than one pitch contonation, while only the culminative one was marked in written texts. A double contonation is clearly indicated in the case of some word + enclitic combinations (e.g. βαρύτητός τε); perhaps the same rules of secondary accentuation applied backwards in polysyllables as they do forward with enclitics. I must leave it to others to decide the merits of the case.

As I have indicated, the only exceptions to the correspondence between stress theory and the new theory of accent are some (but not all) types of word that do not have the recessive accent. (In the

[32] Allen, *Accent and Rhythm*, 262–4.
[33] Ibid. 264.

case of the Aeolic dialect, where the pitch accent was always recessive, there is therefore a complete correspondence.) The ubiquitous short-final oxytones, for example, constitute distinct exceptions, along with paroxytones (in the traditional sense) of more than two syllables, whose last two syllables are short ('pyrrhic' paroxytones). In each of these cases, the syllable predicted for stress is not the same as the accented syllable. It is cases like these that precluded the complete regularity of Allen's synchronic stress rules. In final oxytones, the accent is in any case weak or suppressed, except prepausally. Hence their accent placement could not be predicted by prominence rules derived from a database that excluded verse-final position. The pyrrhic paroxytones display a characteristically Doric shape in accentual melody (in contrast with the recessive Aeolic type).[34] Some of these are examples of words that were able to preserve their Indo-European accent placement within the recessive strictures of later Greek (e.g. $\mu\eta\tau\acute{\epsilon}\rho\alpha$). Certain forms of the perfect participle (e.g. $\lambda\epsilon\lambda\upsilon\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu os$) distinctively display the Doric-style accent. Such 'permissible' shapes may be expected to occur despite a prevailing synchronic pattern.

There is also a class of pyrrhic paroxytones of dactylic shape (e.g. $\pi o\iota\kappa\acute{\iota}\lambda os$). In their case, a poetic pressure may have come into play: such words were historically oxytone (on the ultima), and hence accentually weak or even featureless in context (the more so because they could not stand in the hexameter's final position, which calls for a spondaic or trochaic measure). These dull dactyls, unmusical as they were, may have been too precious to be lost to poetic use; to make them paroxytone would have been the most economical way (by shifting the contonation over one syllable—or more precisely, over one vowel mora) to render them rhythmically interesting inside a dactylic or anapaestic line. (This shift is currently ascribed simply to 'Wheeler's Law'.) The effect is caused not so much by a shift of accent, as by the change from what is in context a word with a relatively suppressed syllable-final accent to one with a full, culminative contonation. In terms of the logic of Allen's rules, this is still to assign prominence, in the case of polysyllabic pyrrhic paroxytones, to an eligible element—of shape (b) (see rule 1)—but in violation of rule 4; this account would apply to all three cases of 'anomalous' Doric-style accent.

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[34] See Smyth, *Greek Grammar,* 39.

With watchful confidence, then, we can say that the correspondence is real. The syllable that receives the primary stress is also the syllable that contains the most prominent change of pitch. (Note that the 'most prominent change of pitch' is an absolute value, which can be either rising or falling.) This stress would seem to be an automatic, predictable consequence of the relation between pitch and quantity in Greek—that is to say, between the position of the contonation within a given word and the quantities of the word's syllables. Where the climax of the contonation, the down-glide or *svarita*, occurs on a heavy syllable, it is prominent and stressed (βαρύς); where the *svarita* occurs on a light syllable, and is thereby de-emphasized, the preceding syllable containing the rise in pitch, the beginning of the contonation, is prominent and stressed (ὀξύς). There is therefore a direct correlation between the hypothetical stress and the traditional pitch accent. There is no double accent; the typological difficulties of stress theory have been removed. But the significance of this analysis goes far beyond the solution of a typological problem. It amounts to a dovetailing and a vindication of ancient and modern approaches.

Allen's stress theory, which had appeared to be a new discovery in Greek prosody, turns out to be directly related to Aristophanes' system of prosodic marks, the legacy of Alexandria and Byzantium. Indeed, the link with Allen's theory may be the first direct evidence that Aristophanes' accent marks—long ignored by teachers and students because of their apparent irrelevance in composition, and their apparent disconnection with the rhythms of verse and prose— *are* in fact representative of the phonetic reality. Aristophanes' system can be justly admired for its principle of descriptive economy: he marks the vowel mora where the voice rose in pitch. But this is not to do the same thing as to mark the phonologically accented syllable, as has generally been assumed until now;[35] for the accented syllable is often the one where the voice fell. Aristophanes gives a *phonetically* economical description of the position of the contonation in a word; but word-level accent, I have argued, arises out of the interaction between the contonation and the quantities of a word's syllables.

The true significance of Aristophanes' system is therefore as a system of pitch contours, but not as a system of accent marks. Such

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[35] For notable exceptions, see Section D of this chapter, 'The Synchronic Picture'.

a phonetic description may well have been employed for the sake of non-native speakers, at the time of the first international dissemination of Greek. Perhaps Aristophanes himself was a foreigner who quite innocently, and quite naturally, *perceived* high pitch as the accentual feature in Greek speech. Or perhaps, as I suggested earlier, his descriptive principle was borrowed from Sanskrit theoreticians.

In either case, native speakers had never had need of marks to teach them where to stress, any more than native English speakers do now. The evidence from ancient authors and grammarians all suggests that the Greeks recognized at least two distinct prosodic features in their language; yet Aristophanes marked his vowels only in terms of one— giving the mistaken impression that only one feature was significant. Evidently, native Greeks described a whole class of words as accented ἐπὶ τῆς βαρείας, despite the fact that every accented word was later marked in terms of the vowel mora of the rising pitch. To explain this apparent disparity between Aristophanes' accent marks and the native, classical descriptions of word-level prosody, we have adduced yet a third description, Allen's reconstruction in terms of the contonation, and have argued that the native, binary description reflects the different effects produced by the placement of the contonation in a range of syllabic environments. The place and the nature of the truly accented syllable which results are predictable, given Aristophanes' high-pitch mark; and Allen's stress theory gives confirmation, by assigning primary prominence to the very same syllable places, through his study of metrical Greek. My solution therefore depends on the accuracy of both the ancient and the modern descriptions; its success would serve to bring ancient and modern linguistics and linguists into complementarity, in terms of methodology and results, in a way that is rarely met with in other fields.

C. THE CASE OF LATIN

A particular confirmation of the theory can be had from the Greek transliteration of Latin proper names, where the stress position in the Latin original is well known. The Latin accent rules say simply: 1. 'Disyllabic words have the accent or stress on the penult.'

2. 'Polysyllabic words have the accent on the penult, when the penult is long; on the antepenult, when the penult is short or common.'[36] In Pausanias we find $A\check{v}\gamma ov\sigma\tau os$ (Lat. Augústus, 3.11.4). Elsewhere we find $M\acute{a}\mu\epsilon\rho\kappa os$ (Mamércus, Dion. Halic. 9.37.1), $M\acute{\epsilon}\tau\epsilon\lambda\lambda os$ (Metéllus, 2.66.4), and $To\acute{v}\beta\epsilon\rho\tau os$ (Tubértus, 5.37.1).[37] Because we know that in all these cases there was a Latin stress on the penult, they may suggest that in Greek, the down-glide following the rise in the voice, when combined with a long quantity, did in fact produce the most prominently stressed syllable in a word, despite the presence of the acute accent mark on the antepenult. The standard accounts of Greek accent can make no sense of these transliterations, unless they are not transliterations at all, but Greek nouns showing the characteristically verbal recession. There are examples, however, of non-recessive transliterations (e.g. *Núma*, $No\mu\hat{a}s$). It is also possible that Greek forms with an acute on the antepenult are a product of the reflex described in Vendryes' Law, if the Latin penult in these words was heard to be pronounced with a circumflex.

Might there have been such a contonation in Latin? A simple synchronic picture, which accords with the traditional account, emerges if we assume a contonation. We are informed by a recent commentator that 'Roman grammarians, down to the 4th cent[ury] AD, describe L[atin] accent in terms appropriate only for a pitch accent.'[38] Modern scholars, however, tend to see a sort of 'Greek envy' in this native description and to be dismissive. But if we frame the new rule for Latin in terms of a recessive contonation, where the voice was required where possible to rise two morae before the ultima—without, in the case of this language, any stipulation as to the quantity of the ultima—the traditional stress rules for polysyllabic words in Latin automatically follow, if the combination of pitch and quantity worked in the way that I have described for Greek. A long penult, with two morae, containing the rise combined with the Latin version of the *svarita*, would produce a circumflex on the penult

[36] B. L. Gildersleeve and Gonzalez Lodge, *Latin Grammar*, 3rd edn., London: St Martin's Press, 1895, 8.

[37] I owe this observation and data to John F. Paulas, doctoral student in Classics, University of Chicago, personal communication, 2001.

[38] Andrew L. Sihler, *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1995, 241.

(*amîcus*); while a short penult (of one mora) would cause the rise to revert back one mora to the antepenult, producing the Latin acute with a de-emphasized *svarita* (*fácilis*). In making an authoritative correction, Quintilian actually points to this recessive rule. Discussing errors in accentuation, he cites *Cethêgus* as properly having a 'flex' on the penult (*Institutio Oratoria* 1.5): the common error was to pronounce the penult grave in this word instead of circumflex, which apparently rendered the penult short. (A circumflex requires two morae.) He implies that this change in the quantity of the penult necessitates an acute first syllable (*Céthegus*)—an erroneous pronunciation, but one which confirms the proposed rule. The Latin accent was a *recessive contonation*, a rise and a fall, *where the rise occurred*, wherever possible, *on the second mora before the ultima.*

The case of iambic disyllables in Latin presents a problem, however. It is impossible for the rise to recede beyond the short penult in words of this shape. Does the down-glide then fill the whole of the long ultima, and make it prominent? The received rule says stress the penult. But in Plutarch we find both $K\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\nu$ (*Cáto*) and $No\mu\hat{\alpha}\varsigma$ (*Núma*). The standard account of Greek accent can of course make no sense of the latter case, a circumflex in the transliteration of a final Latin syllable. But even on my account, which does predict a prominent ultima, we are asked to distinguish between a post-acute barytone ($K\acute{\alpha}\tau\grave{\omega}\nu$) and a circumflex; whereas the received Latin rule instructs us to stress the penult and to disregard the final syllable altogether. What could motivate the transliteration $No\mu\hat{\alpha}\varsigma$ if the *first* syllable in such a case is supposed to be stressed in Latin?

The possibility of a stress of some kind on a long ultima in Latin, in disyllables where the penult is short, seems to be indicated in the Latin hexameter. The first caesura of the first line of the *Aeneid* is 'spoiled' if one recites *cánō* instead of *canò*. But it is only in the case of these iambs that we should consider the possibility of a stressed ultima in Virgil's verse, against the sense of the rest of Latin; a stressed long ultima in other cases would seem to violate his conscious and artful syncopations. (An editor cites *appárent rári nántes in gúrgite vásto* (1.118)[39] both for its spondees and its accentual

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[39] R. D. Williams (ed.), *The Aeneid of Virgil Books 1–6*, Glasgow: St Martin's Press, 1972, p. xxviii.

conflict with the ictus; stressed ultimas in this line would produce a merely regular rhythm.) It would seem that the only way to make a Latin hexameter ascend in rhythm, apart from the case in line 1 of a prosodic iamb at the caesura, is with a final monosyllable (*signíficant ínitum percûlsae côrda túà ví*, Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, 1.13).

The recessive contonation rule for Latin would seem to resolve the issues. The rule is identical to the one I have described for Greek except for location: the onset is two morae before the ultima wherever possible, but as many as two morae may follow the down-glide because a final syllable may be long and free of accent in Latin. *Fácilis* and *Cícerō* would both be 'sharp' on the antepenult; but the rule predicts 'heavy' on the penult for *amîcus*, *Cicerônis*, due to the down-glide falling within the long penult. Pyrrhic words (*níhil*) would be 'sharp' on the penult because of the short ultima. For quantitative trochees and spondees, the rule predicts a circumflex on the penult (*côrda*, *rârī*). In all these cases, therefore, a recessive contonation rule of the kind described is in complete accord with the received rules for Latin stress (*Cícero, Cicerônis, níhil, côrda, râri*): in each of them we find prominence assigned to the same syllable by both accounts.

In iambic words (*canò*), and only in these cases, does the new rule predict a 'heavy' accent on the ultima, in contrast to the received rule. This is because the rise occupies the single mora of the penult, whereas the *svarita* occupies the two morae of the ultima. The iambic disyllable is the only shape of Latin word, apart from long monosyllables, where the down-glide *could* occupy the ultima. We have not yet explained, however, why Greek hears a circumflex ($No\mu\hat{a}s$ rather than $N\acute{o}\mu\grave{a}s$) in the ultima of *Numa*. But we *can* predict that his ultima is 'heavy'. Such a prosody for iambic words, based on the new rule, manifestly improves the scansion of Latin verse.

In the case of $K\acute{a}\tau\omega\nu$ (and also $K\iota\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega\nu$, *Cícero*), the presence of the 'ν' tells us that the Greek nominative was based on the oblique stem and hence shows the oblique stress (*Cicerônis, Catônis*).[40] Generalizing from oblique forms is not uncommon in descent and in translation (note the tendency among Romance nouns to descend from Latin accusative forms). It is possible that a similar account

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[40] Due in part to Anne David, personal communication, 2002.

could also apply to *Numa*/*Νομᾶς*. The first declension genitive in *-ae*, a 'purely Latin creation', had its origin in *-āī*. We find this spelling and scansion for the ending in Plautus.[41] The Old Latin provenance of the name in question justifies a claim for the role of this genitive. The Latin contonation results in a prosody, *Numâī*, that is impossible to duplicate in Greek, where a final long is always heavy and a rise would have had to occur on the last mora of the penult. A Greek rendering of the prosody of Latin first declension genitive *-ae*, where it was clear that the contraction had derived from *-āī*, would therefore have been as a circumflex upon a contraction. This may have led to the positing in such a case of a nominative circumflected on the ultima.

The phenomenon of 'iambic shortening' in early Latin,[42] where words of an iambic shape shortened the ultima, could at first sight be taken to indicate the presence of stress on the penult as the cause. What is more likely, however, is that the uniqueness of the accent on the ultima in these words caused an analogical pressure to modify them. Shortening the ultima prevents what would otherwise have been an *automatic* consequence of the location of the contonation: a prominent down-glide over the long syllable. Hence iambic shortening is in fact more evidence for the presence of a contonation in Latin. In sum: the proposed contonation rule succeeds perfectly in predicting the received rules for Latin stress, but also predicts an ultima stress in iambic disyllables; the presence of such an iambic stress is indicated (1) by the reinforcement of metrical ictus in poetry; (2) by the transliteration of iambic Roman names into Greek; and (3) indirectly by the historical phenomenon of iambic shortening, understood on this account as due to analogy: all the other Latin word shapes eschew an ultima prosody. This description therefore vindicates those Roman grammarians who described their accent in the tonal terms that recalled the Greek comparate.

[41] Sihler, *New Comparative Grammar*, 269–70; Carl Darling Buck, *Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, 175–6.

[42] See Sihler, *New Comparative Grammar*, 79–80; Buck, *Comparative Grammar*, 95–6.

D. THE SYNCHRONIC PICTURE

My argument that the ὀξύς and βαρύς as the ancients knew them were two different kinds of accent has so far been a historical one. I now adduce the arguments of Alan Sommerstein, who in *The Sound Pattern of Ancient Greek* reinforces this claim with a theory based on purely structural considerations. His analysis depends on the use of two binary features, called sharp and falling ('sharp' only because 'high' is already a segmental feature[43]), to render the most elegant solutions to two problems in Greek accentuation. Sommerstein shows how analysis assuming a single feature (either high pitch, or simply accent with the variable assignations 'tonic' and 'falling glide') yields 'unnecessary extra phonetic detail rules' in one case and an arbitrary, independent rule (Vendryes' Law) in the other. The first problem is the Rule of Enclisis, or accent involving enclitics. Acknowledging the down-glide as a separate feature allows Sommerstein to make the simplest statement of the rule:

Accent the last mora of the word when an enclitic follows, provided that that mora does not have a falling glide on it.[44]

The second problem lies in words like ἕτοιμος and ἄνθρωπος, where the normal 'tri-morically recessive' rule would have predicted ἑτοῖμος and ἀνθρῶπος. The down-glide considered as an accentual feature removes the difficulty and obviates the need for any new law. Two binary features generate four classes of vowel, as is shown in Sommerstein's table,[45] supplemented by my new interpretation and some typical examples (see Table 3.1). Sommerstein's table is meant to apply to vowels, but it could also apply to syllables, and with this advantage: a case like that in ἄνδρα, a closed syllable with a short vowel marked acute, would also be seen to fit under rubric (*a*) (+ sharp + falling). Note that Sommerstein does not rely on historical evidence to justify a separate + falling feature. The tradition suggests the primacy of high pitch (+ sharp). Allen's comparative work does

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[43] Alan H. Sommerstein, *The Sound Pattern of Ancient Greek*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1973, 127.
[44] Ibid. 123.
[45] Ibid. 127.

Table 3.1. Classification of vowel prosody (following Sommerstein)

(*a*)	+ sharp + falling	circumflex: βαρύς(ὀξύβαρυς) (also closed trochaic acute)	δῶρον, ζῆν, ἄνδρα
(*b*)	+ sharp − falling	acute: ὀξύς	ἥκομεν, λόγος
(*c*)	− sharp + falling	post-acute: βαρύς	ἄνθρωπος, ἤβὴ, λόγὸς τε
(*d*)	− sharp − falling	all others: μέσος	

Source: based on Sommerstein, *The Sound Pattern of Ancient Greek*

suggest the historical presence of a *svarita* in Greek, but as an automatic down-glide dependent on the high pitch. The goals of synchronic formalism—the elimination of unnecessary and/or arbitrary rules—motivate Sommerstein's recognition of + falling as a separate feature from + sharp. My own study calls attention to the fact that the Ancients also described two separate features as the elements of vocal harmony, ὀξύς and βαρύς. I have therefore identified Allen's dependent *svarita* with Sommerstein's separate + falling feature, and adduced the ancient descriptions to permit its being named with the emphatic, positive term βαρύς.

More recently, Chris Golston has followed P. Sauzet:

The central insight to Sauzet's analysis is that the orthographic H [high tone] in A[ncient] G[reek] need not be the pitch accent. Instead, he posits a L* tone that marks the pitch accent; the tonal melody HL* is mapped onto the word with L* mapped onto the prominent syllable. H docks to the mora immediately preceding L*.[46]

When he combines this insight, which corresponds to an important component of the theory proposed here, with Allen's rules, where a stress 'matrix' consists of one heavy or two light syllables (what Golston refers to as a 'moraic trochee'), he is able to predict, with a

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[46] Golston, 'Floating H (and L*) Tones', 72. See also P. Sauzet, 'L'accent du grec ancien et les relations entre structure métrique et représentation autosegmentale', *Langages*, 95 (1989), 81–113; for a conspectus and summaries of these, see R. Noyer, 'Attic Greek Accentuation and Intermediate Derivational Representations', in I. Roca (ed.), *Derivations and Constraints in Phonology*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997, 501–27.

minimum of *ad hoc* stipulations, most of the known accentual shapes
for word plus enclitic combinations. (It is unclear why he does not
distinguish between long and short monosyllabic enclitics, given his
adoption of Allen's matrix.) The 'insight' corresponds to Allen's
observation, supported statistically, that the *svarita* tended to fall
on the strong positions of feet. It has not occurred to synchronic
phonologists, however, to consider the other possibility in the theory
proposed here, that certain quantitative environments produce H*L
(i.e. prominent H). Golston brings 'Sauzet's analysis of accentuation
in line with Allen's previous analysis of stress, allowing both stress
and accent to be read off of the same metrical grid'.[47] It seems
reasonable that there ought to be a historical fact underlying the
modern synchronic analyses that point to this accentually significant
low tone that follows the acute. It also seems reasonable that there
ought to be a historical record of such a prominent phenomenon.
I claim that it is a modern misinterpretation, based on a reinterpret-
ation of the term that took place in the ancient world, that has
obscured the true nature of the heavy βαρύς.

The ὀξύς and βαρύς accents might best be classified as two kinds of
stress. A variety of evidence supports such an unconventional
description. Consider this modern observation:

While pitch remains the general acoustic signal for what we refer to as tone
(or tones), it has been established that pitch is the most reliable perceptual
cue for stress (the most common kind of accent). Studies by Fry (1955,
1958), Mol and Uhlenbeck (1956), Bolinger (1958) and others have estab-
lished that the most effective means by which speakers realize and detect
stress in English are, respectively, *changing pitch*, duration, and intensity.[48]

There is therefore no *prima facie* case against the idea that the Greek
usage describes two kinds of stress accent by their characteristic
changes in pitch. It must be acknowledged that in non-melodic
contexts, 'stress' is a more suitable translation than 'pitch' for τόνος
and τάσις, both of which share the verb root in 'tension'; we have

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[47] Ibid. 77.
[48] Larry Hyman, 'Tone And/Or Accent', in Donna Jo Napoli (ed.), *Elements of
Tone, Stress and Intonation*, Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1978, 2
(emphasis added).

observed how the musical meaning of ὀξύς and βαρύς (predicates of τόνος and τάσις), as stationary sound or pitch, is a derivative one. We have already demonstrated the direct association of both accents with ictus. There must have been intensity (amplitude) in them as well as changing pitch, suggestive of stress. The transition to the Modern Greek stress accent might also be more easily explained on these terms.

The problem with this classification, however, is that a number of features associated with stress, such as vowel weakening or shortening in unstressed syllables, do not appear to have been operative in the recorded period. Perhaps certain aspects of the theory of vowel gradation (ablaut) could be more easily explained if the ὀξύς and βαρύς accents were stress features in Greek; currently the stress needed to explain this gradation is projected into the mysterious early history of Indo-European. (Carl Buck cites εἶμι/ἴμεν, which parallels Vedic *émi / imás*; note that to account for the vowel weakening in the penult of ἴμεν, Buck does not consider the possible prominence of the down-glide on the closed ultima, but rather attributes the shape of the extant Greek form to 'secondary accent'.[49]) The examples seem to be historical artifacts, however, and the stress component of the contonation must once have been stronger than in archaic or classical times.

The Latin accent seems to have been a stress feature that moved from a historical word-initial position[50] to an extant culminative one. There is strong evidence cited above for a contonation in classical Latin, but the location rule would be different from either Greek or Vedic. The location of the accent was clearly not the same in Greek or Latin as in the parent tongue, but perhaps its nature—a 'stress-contonation'—is similar to that of the original Indo-European accent. On the other hand, perhaps it was the culminative function of the accent in Greek and Latin—each of them has restrictions on location formulable in terms of the closing syllables of a word—that induced the dynamic component that is not present in the Vedic contonation. Why in Greek this component 'softened' historically, in terms of its effects on unaccented syllables, is unclear.

[49] Buck, *Comparative Grammar*, 110.
[50] Gildersleeve and Lodge, *Latin Grammar*, 445.

Note that in the context of Greek epic rhythm, we even see cases of *lengthening* in unstressed syllables—that is, syllables preceding the contonation (e.g. ἀ̄θάνατος, Ἀχιλ(λ)εύς).

In Vedic, the free location of the IE accent is thought to have been preserved, as the onset of a contonation that can cross word boundaries; but the stress component required to explain the phenomenon of ablaut is commonly supposed to have been lost, leaving an accent for Vedic implemented purely by changing pitch. Classical Sanskrit apparently also adopted a culminative function, in that classical Sanskrit exhibits 'a recessive system practically the same as the Latin one.'[51] The original IE accent picture, on the basis of these cognate languages, therefore seems to require something different from each of them: a contonation that expressed a stress, so as to produce ablaut, but that was free, not delimited by the word, and non-culminative.

With some degree of assurance, then, we adopt a heuristic hypothesis for extant Greek: the ὀξύς and βαρύς were two kinds of stress, one sharp and rising, the other heavy and falling. The ὀξύς is an arrested stress, a pre-empted contonation, while the βαρύς is a culminative down-beat.

The iambic/trochaic and dactylic/anapaestic metres have always carried some weight for our ears, because long syllables so often correspond with metrical down-beats. But now we have freed the rhythm from the metre; independent knowledge of the sharp and heavy stress points in Greek words allows us to speak the rhythm in full syncopation, at times in unison, at other times in counterpoint with the tendency to ascend or descend inherent in the various metres. Nowhere is this knowledge more important than in the performance of choral lyrics. But short of performance, there is now a new possibility for the metrical and harmonic analysis of poetic texts. I shall give examples from Homer that constitute the central demonstration of Chapter 4; examples from lyric can be found in Chapter 8. The reader can begin to construct these analyses for himself: the values of vowels and consonants are scrupulously rendered by Allen in *Vox Graeca*; the quantities are given; now the stresses are given as well. One possible hazard comes with the pyrrhic

paroxytones (e.g. λόγος); these can be either ὀξύς (λόγον ἀκούω) or βαρύς (λόγὸς τε) depending on their environment. They are probably also βαρύς at pauses or ends of lines. Grave accents may be either lightly sharp or unaccented; their treatment in musical settings is ambiguous. Oxytones before a pause are probably sharp (εἰπέ·), but possibly the pause allowed for a full contonation. A pause allows for a physiological release that could replace the down-glide, where a down-glide could not occur within the borders of a word.

Remaining questions for performers include the rise in the voice before the βαρύς. We have already argued that there must have been some audible signal to allow Aristophanes to mark the circumflex, and we have adduced testimony from the grammarians as to its nature; yet the prosodic evidence (as well as Vedic) suggests equal value for the circumflex and post-acute accents. As we shall shortly see, a comparison of passages from Plato and Aristotle supports both verdicts at once.

The questions of metrical indifference and synapheia at line end are also difficult. Music is as much in the silence as in the sound, in the pause as in the movement; what is required of metrical theory is a sensitivity to the aural nature of the line (or period), to its distinguishing marks, and to the organic rhythmic relations between periods and broader sense groups. There seems to be no compelling reason to read the variation in quantities at line end as anything but actual and intentional. As to acute or grave at line end, we must use our own judgement of sense and rhythm, or accept an editor's choices. Διόρθωσις or 'correction' of a text, with regard to accentuation in particular, has been an editor's (and a performer's) prerogative at least since the time of Aristotle.[52] Stephen Daitz's practice with regard to pauses in the middle of hexameter lines, which entails 'corrections' to the latest printed texts of Homer in the case of some oxytones, earns him a place, perhaps, as the latest in an antique series of scholar-performers.[53] We should not be surprised, at all events, if it turns out that what is doubtful to a metrician is decisive

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[52] Gregory Nagy, *Poetry as Performance: Homer and Beyond*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, 149–50 and 115–50 *passim*.

[53] Stephen Daitz, 'On Reading Homer Aloud: To Pause or Not to Pause', *American Journal of Philology*, 112: 2 (1991), 150–60.

for a poet, and that the particular accentual cadence at the end of a line, whose nature can depend entirely on the quantity of the 'doubtful' final syllable, is in fact the line's true rhythmic resolution, the musical goal of singer and dancer alike.

A simple set of rules can be drawn up for the practical implementation of stress in relation to the written accent marks, so that ancient Greek verse and prose can be performed dynamically on the basis of our present texts. The following directives for each of the accent marks require little qualification:

1. *Circumflex*: stress strongly in relation to unmarked syllables in the word with a rise, a break, and a heavy fall in pitch (unless one is persuaded by Allen; in which case simply with a falling pitch).
2. *Grave*: leave unstressed, or lightly stressed in relation to unmarked syllables with a slight rise in pitch (in accord with some late musical settings).
3. *Acute*: examine the following syllable; if it is

(*a*) heavy, or prepausal, stress the following syllable heavily with falling pitch.
(*b*) light, or non-existent, stress the acute itself sharply with rising pitch, or with a full contonation if the acute syllable is closed.

E. ANCIENT *LOCI*

Do the relevant *loci antiqui* bear interpretations consistent with these findings? Or do they rather support the conventional reading of ὀξύτης—βαρύτης as accented–unaccented? At *Cratylus* 399a–b, Socrates describes two principal changes that need to be made in phrases to turn them into names: the insertion or removal of letters, and the exchanging (μεταβάλλειν) of 'sharp [accents]' (ὀξύτητας). As an example, the phrase Διὶ φίλος becomes a proper name (presumably Δίφιλος) by the removing from its place of one iota, and by the speaking of the middle syllable 'heavy instead of sharp' (ἀντὶ ὀξείας τῆς μέσης συλλαβῆς βαρεῖαν). Now it is true that under the new system we should call Δίφιλος an oxytone word (on the antepenult), not a barytone on the penult, but Plato is not describing the

accentuation of the word as a whole; in showing how the phrase becomes a name, his unit of analysis is the syllable, and he points to the syllables which undergo the greatest change. In the phrase *Διὶ φίλος*, the syllable -*φι*- contains the rise in pitch of the voice; in the name *Δίφιλος*, it contains the beginning of the down-glide. It is striking that he finds this change of more note than that indicated in print by the change from grave to acute in the syllable *Δι*-. Under the conventional interpretation, where unmarked and grave syllables are thought to be unaccented, the changes in *Δι*- and -*φι*- are essentially equivalent in their absolute value: unaccented to accented in one case, and accented to unaccented in the other. The new theory, however, sees the change in *Δι*- as at most a change in degree, while the change in -*φι*- is seen as a change in both direction and kind. Hence it is better able to make sense of Plato's selection of this syllable in the analysis.

A second example seems to describe the transformation of *ἀναθρῶν* (in the phrase *ἀναθρῶν ἃ ὄπωπεν*, 399c) into the noun *ἄνθρωπος*, by means of an alpha being removed, and the last syllable becoming 'heavier' (*βαρυτέρας τῆς τελευτῆς*). This description is consistent with both the conventional theory and the new theory. The conventional analysis appears to make good sense of it: if *βαρυτέρας* means 'less accented,' an unmarked omega could be so described in relation to a circumflected one. The new theory, on the other hand, describes both a post-acute long and a circumflected long as prominent (i.e. accented) and *βαρύς*. Plato's use of the comparative may be instructive, however. The circumflex contains both the rise and the fall, whereas the post-acute long contains only a stressed fall. It therefore makes sense for Plato to call the syllable only containing the fall 'heavier' in relation to that bearing the circumflex.

The latter interpretation appears to be confirmed by a passage in Aristotle's *Sophistical Refutations* (166b). A certain expression of Homer's, printed here without diacritics: *το μεν ου καταπυθεται ομβρωι*, makes poor sense when *ου* is read off as the relative pronoun *οὗ*. The solution, of course, is to read it as *οὐ*, which solution Aristotle describes as 'speaking the *ou* sharper' (*λέγοντες τὸ ου ὀξύτερον*). To begin with, the conventional analysis can do little with the comparative, which would have to mean 'more accented'. But more critically, the tradition sees *οὐ* as unaccented, while *οὗ* is accented. The only

solution on this line is to emend Aristotle. The new theory can make sense of the comparative, however. If the circumflex is heard as βαρύς, with the *svarita* predominating, an unaccented or μέσος syllable should straightforwardly be described in relation to it as 'sharper'. *The comparatives would seem to be critical.* The ἀναθρῶν → ἄνθρωπος example from the *Cratylus* suggests that a post-acute long is heavier than a circumflex, presumably because the circumflex contains the rise in the voice. Despite the presence of this rise, however, the passage from Aristotle suggests that in comparison, a completely unaccented syllable is sharper than a circumflex. This would fit with the notion that a circumflex and a post-acute long are both βαρύς in comparison with unaccented or ὀξύς syllables, because of the dominant sounding of the *svarita*, but would also vindicate the choice of a distinctive circumflected sign for those long vowels and diphthongs bearing the down-glide, where a rise occurs in pitch within the first mora. The following gradation in terms of 'sharpness' in the designated syllable would make sense of the positives and comparatives in these passages: post-acute <circumflex <unmarked non-post-acute <grave < acute. Of course the sequence is to be read with the signs reversed for the quality of 'heaviness'.

Two particular *loci* from the *Timaeus*, neglected in accounts of prosody, are of peculiar interest. At 67b Plato takes up the phenomena of sound and hearing, describing sound as a 'stroke' (πληγήν) passing through the ears, and hearing as the resultant internal motion; he observes,

ὅση δ' αὐτῆς ταχεῖα, ὀξεῖαν, ὅση δὲ βραδυτέρα, βαρυτέραν·

Every [motion] that is quick [makes] a sharp [sound], every motion that is slower, a heavier [sound].

The contrasting elements of rhythm, quick and slow, are linked explicitly to the ὀξύς and βαρύς, the elements of harmony. That 'quick and slow' are understood to be the elements of rhythm is evident from *Symposium* 187c. Note the emphasis on motion, and how counter-intuitive is this pairing for us: we should rather find the elements of rhythm in a static distinction, such as 'long and short' or 'stressed and unstressed'. It will not take my reader long, however, as he takes up Greek verse with his new tools, to feel intuitively the

association made here; it is borne out in theory by the fact that the ὀξύς accent is usually followed by one or two short syllables, which give it a propulsive quality in the line, while the βαρύς word is always cadenced on a long syllable, lending it weight and measure. The passage at *Philebus* 17c–d (quoted in Chapter 2) also connects the metrical motions of the body to the sharp and heavy elements of vocal harmony. The 'features' (πάθη) of rhythm and metre are said to be different things of the same sort (ἕτερα τοιαῦτα) in relation to the 'intervals' of sharp and heavy produced by the voice.

We have always understood the elements of metre (long and short); we now know the elements of harmony, which are themselves the key to Greek rhythm. In a revelatory passage later on in the *Timaeus* (80a ff.), Plato appears to describe the experience of such harmony and rhythm, as lines of Greek verse and perhaps epic verse in particular would manifest them:

καὶ ὅσοι φθόγγοι ταχεῖς τε καὶ βραδεῖς ὀξεῖς τε καὶ βαρεῖς φαίνονται, τοτὲ μὲν ἀνάρμοστοι φερόμενοι δι' ἀνομοιότητα τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ὑπ' αὐτῶν κινήσεως, τοτὲ δὲ ξύμφωνοι δι' ὁμοιότητα. τὰς γὰρ τῶν προτέρων καὶ θαττόνων οἱ βραδύτεροι κινήσεις, ἀποπαυομένας ἤδη τε εἰς ὅμοιον ἐληλυθυίας αἷς ὕστερον αὐτοὶ προσφερόμενοι κινοῦσιν ἐκείνας, καταλαμβάνουσι, καταλαμβάνοντες δὲ οὐκ ἄλλην ἐπεμβάλλοντες ἀνετάραξαν κίνησιν, ἀλλ' ἀρχὴν βραδυτέρας φορᾶς κατὰ τὴν τῆς θάττονος ἀπολληγούσης δὲ ὁμοιότητα προσάψαντες μίαν ἐξ ὀξείας καὶ βαρείας ξυνεκεράσαντο πάθην, ὅθεν ἡδονὴν μὲν τοῖς ἄφροσιν, εὐφροσύνην δὲ τοῖς ἔμφροσι διὰ τὴν τῆς θείας ἁρμονίας μίμησιν ἐν θνηταῖς γενομένην φοραῖς παρέσχον.

[We must pursue] also those sounds which appear quick and slow, sharp and heavy, at one time borne in discord because of the disagreement (ἀνομοιότης) of the motion caused by them in us, but at another in concord because of agreement (ὁμοιότης). For the slower sounds overtake the movements of those earlier and quicker ones, when these are already ceasing and have come into agreement with those motions with which afterwards, when they are brought to bear, the slow sounds themselves move them; and in overtaking they did not cause a disturbance, imposing another motion, but once they had attached the beginning of a slower passage, in accord with the agreement of the quicker one, which was fading, they mixed together a single experience out of sharp and heavy sound (ὀξείας καὶ βαρείας), whence they furnished pleasure to the mindless, but peace of mind to the thoughtful, because of the imitation of the divine harmony arisen in mortal orbits.

To begin with, sounds, or perhaps 'utterances,' are described as quick and slow, sharp and heavy. In light of 67b above, and the unusual, non-chiastic arrangement of the sentence around consecutive τε-και constructions, it is natural to read 'similarity' here (ὁμοιότης, like to like) as a correspondence of quick to sharp, and of slow to heavy. Such a correspondence constitutes 'agreement'. 'Disagreement' would arise out of the opposite collocations. While all four qualities are equally qualities of sound, they are grouped in two pairs, and it is tempting to see the first pair as belonging to the metrical component of prosody, and the second pair to the tonic. When a term subsumes a pair of definitive contraries—as, for example, 'number' in relation to the 'even and odd'—Plato sometimes treats the pair as synonymous (or metonymous) with the term itself (see e.g. *Laws* 818c, *Epinomis* 990c). Hence the pairs here seem likely to refer to what he elsewhere calls 'rhythm' and 'harmony'. In particular, in the context of the motile internal dynamism of a rhythmic foot, quick would most naturally refer to the arsis, which contains one or two shorts, while slow refers to the long thesis. As one considers the dominating influence of the slow and heavy sounds in the process described, a special weight may be given to the disagreement or 'dissimilarity' arising out of the conjunction of heavy and quick, where a heavy sound occurs in the arsis, as also to the sense of agreement or 'similarity' produced by a heavy sound where it is supposed to be, in the thesis. Such disagreement and agreement is understood as belonging not to the sounds themselves, but to motions produced by the sounds 'within us'. Later in the passage sounds are said to 'move motions' (κινοῦσιν κινήσεις). It is not clear whether these motions are understood to be entirely internal, or whether a literal reference is being made to orchestic performance. In a heightened state of poetic transport, perhaps the distinction becomes moot.

There appear to be two points of dynamic moment in this description: the first when the slower sounds 'overtake the movements of those earlier and quicker ones'; the second when they attach 'the beginning of a slower passage'. At first it would appear that the interaction occurs entirely within the realm of rhythm and metre: slower sounds 'overtake' quicker ones. But in so doing, the narrator says, they have 'mixed together a single experience out of sharp and heavy'. The interaction of harmony and rhythm begins at a trot in

disagreement; then subtly turns, as at the cadence of the caesura, where slow sounds first 'overtake' the motion and come to a point of agreement. Then comes a new beginning, as at the diaeresis, leading to euphonic agreement in the coda (the fortuitous fact which made Allen's stress study possible). It is emphasized that the overtaking and the new beginning do not introduce a disturbance; rather, the new passage is 'on the terms' of the agreement (κατὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα) reached in the earlier quicker passage. It would seem, therefore, that an agreement reached at the caesura becomes fully confirmed in the coda.[54]

This is a remarkable attempt, by a native speaker without recourse to technical terms from a dead language, at describing the syncopation and the accentual cadence of verse, both the phenomena themselves and their physical effects. Andrew Barker has interpreted this passage as about 'concordance', describing the phenomenon of tones sounding together. He fails, however, to resolve what he refers to as the passage's 'main difficulty':

The main difficulty is in the interpretation of 'similar'. If it means 'identical', we are left wondering why what is heard is not a unison. If it means something like 'proportional' (in a concordant ratio), then we have to explain why the first sound's motion must 'fade' before such a relation can be reached.[55]

Barker makes an imaginative attempt to defend the first alternative, but his assumption that the passage is speaking of concord has created false options. The sense of ὁμοιότης will accommodate neither 'identical' nor 'proportional': 'similar' here refers to an agreement of like to like, arising between elements whose natural origin is quite different (that is, the quick and slow of rhythm and the sharp and heavy of harmony). We note that the unity that Timaeus describes is a thing extended in time, an experiential unity, produced by the peaceable ranging of tensed forces (peaceable at least as Plato

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[54] It is possible also to see the passage as describing the modulation between the hemiepes and the 'E' section of dactylo-epitrite (see Ch. 8); but it is less easy to see in this case why agreement in the dactylic run would be of the same order as agreement in the sequence of heavy theses in the epitritic cadence.

[55] Andrew Barker, *Greek Musical Writings*, ii: *Harmonic and Acoustic Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, 62.

enjoyed them). The passage does not speak of simultaneous sounds
or chords, but of certain kinds of sound overtaking and displacing
others in a sequence.

The passage in fact seems to be the development of a theme that
Timaeus had sounded earlier (47a–e) about the greatest benefits to us
of vision and of hearing. (Plato's long discourses in the *Timaeus* and
Laws seem to keep circling round a kind of zodiac of themes,
revisiting and refining them at each pass, in a philosophical version
of ring composition.) The greatest gift of sight is the contemplation
of the heavens, and the possibility this gives us of imitating the grand
unchanging periods of the heavenly motions somehow in the inner
motions of the rational soul. But what is most striking here is that
sound and hearing also, not only sight, allow us when disrupted to
imitate and so re-establish the heavenly periods within us, this time
through both harmony and rhythm. These latter two are said to be a
gift of the Muses, those archetypal circle dancers, which currently
produces a merely irrational pleasure, but whose true purpose is to
restore a certain inner 'period' to a state of cosmos (47d). The
repeated distinction between an irrational pleasure tagging along,
and a higher benefit from hearing the Muses, seems concretely to link
the passages. The dance imagery is here explicit: through sound and
rhythm (and also an auditor's hearing) it would seem that an earthly
χορεία can participate in the heavenly one.

Giovanni Comotti claims the following as a basic propostion:

the Greeks and Romans did not know harmony, in the modern sense of the
term, or polyphony; their music expressed itself through pure melodic line
alone. The accompaniment faithfully followed the development of the song,
either in unison or at the interval of an octave. Only after the fourth century
B.C. do we know of songs accompanied at an interval of a fourth or a fifth.[56]

Our vertical sense of harmony in music draws a different kind of
unity out of sound and time; but the horizontal, rhythmic sense of a
melodic cadence, of disagreement seeking agreement in cycles of
accent and rhythm, is still vital in western musical discourse. English
poets knew well this ancient sense until recently. The psychological

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[56] Giovanni Comotti, *Music in Greek and Roman Culture*, tr. Rosaria V. Munson,
Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989, 12.

implication of Plato's account is simple and powerful: the different accents and rhythms impinge physically on the ear to produce correlated motions inside us; the experience of harmony in these motions of ὀξύς and βαρύς is therefore a uniting of the internal and the external. We recall the dancer whose feet follow his voice; the correspondence of harmony and rhythm is none other than that of voice and foot. As he dances in the round, pushing forward, slowing down, turning and returning to the modulations of his voice, he imitates the motions of the Same and the Other in a harmonious universe.

The vistas are now open: πάντ᾽ ἔχεις λόγον.

4

The Form of the Hexameter: The Origins of Caesura and Diaeresis

In this chapter we shall draw on two strands of evidence that bear on the form of the dactylic hexameter, a metre composed of isochronous feet, maladapted to Greek speech, that remains opaque and a mere given in all current theories of Homer. One strand comes from Plato and from Aristotle; the other from modern Greek folk dance. When we combine them with the new theory of the Greek accent just set out, we shall gain a genuinely new insight into this form. A theory interwoven of these three sources accounts for the fundamental features of traditional hexameter structure: it predicts that there will be two kinds of caesura in the third foot, with one of them favoured; and that there will be a bucolic diaeresis. It will also provide an insight as to why some of these 'traditional' cuts in the hexameter line were not in fact observed as such, or at all, in the ancient world. Hence we are about to present a complete and choral theory of hexameter form, that must be seen to entail a 'choral theory' of Homeric composition.

A. CADENCES IN NINE AND EIGHT

The sarabande has a strong second beat. But its time signature tells us that we are in triple time, and the score with its bar lines tells us that the first beat must be accented. In a number of its measures, however, the second beat of a sarabande is longer than the first—longer than the downbeat. This anomaly in the rhythm tells us that something

external to the 'logic' of the metre must be going on. In the version of the French court, we know that the sarabande in fact involved an extravagantly stately dance step (*tems de courante*), with a sliding of the unplanted foot on that 'off' second beat.[1] But the evidence that there must have been some such external dance step guiding the movement is in fact internal to the melody itself, in the phenomenon of a regular syncopation that lengthens what ought to be an off beat.

The phenomenon of agreement at certain points of a poetic line, the phenomenon that formed the premiss of Allen's investigation into Greek stress, does not in itself point to an external source of metre. Language itself, by itself, can generate a metrical pattern with which it then counterpoints in poetic rhythm. We do not have to look to dance, for example, to account for the music of the English pentameter. But we are in a position now to examine the evidence that in the case of Homeric poetry, and later also in lyric, the phenomenon of agreement depends upon a metrical pattern generated by the foot in dance that harmonizes with, or is harmonized by, a pattern of melodic accentuation in the voice. The informing power of this 'dance partner' in Homeric composition will be seen in fact to be pervasive.

As in the case of the sarabande, some of the evidence for the dance origins of the epic hexameter is internal to its form. The bucolic diaeresis, as I mentioned in the Introduction, is the regularization of an inceptive cue, a new beginning, just before the end of the hexameter line. Unlike the midline caesura, this diaeresis is a typological mystery, a violation of the rhythmic logic of a stichic line. What is the origin of the bucolic diaeresis? A modern Greek dance provides an answer.

But first let us look to ancient sources for the form of the hexameter. In a passage that celebrates the ubiquitous power of 'the double', the ratio 2:1, the author of Plato's *Epinomis* concludes, in the sweep of his exuberance, by drawing a connection between the numbers implicit in the relation of doubleness and those involved in the 'blessed dance of the Muses' (εὐδαίμονι χορείᾳ Μουσῶν, 991b). The writer calls attention to the arithmetic and harmonic means between

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[1] Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne, *Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach*, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1991, 93.

six and twelve (the ratio 12:6 is a version of the ratio 2:1, or 'the double'), which produce the ratios ἡμιόλιον (3:2) and ἐπίτριτον (4:3) with the extremes. In the case of 12:6, these means are the numbers nine and eight. Nine and eight happen to add up to seventeen, the number of steps in a dactylic hexameter catalectic. Nine and eight are seen to link the all-encompassing ratio of doubleness with the Muses' dance, which is itself said to be granted concordance and commensurability in harmony and rhythm by 'turning between them' (ἐπ' ἀμφότερα στρεφομένη).[2]

There is a remarkable amount of information here, if one sifts it out of the numerology, for an analysis of the ἔπος as dance. First of all, we have explicit evidence that the seventeen elements of the dactylic hexameter, nine plus eight, *were* in fact elements of a dance. (Without any further qualification, the phrase 'dance of the Muses' was apparently sufficient to refer to the epic hexameter.) What is more, this dance had a significant division in the sense of its steps, yielding sub-periods of nine and eight. Only if this were so could the writer have linked the double ratio and the Muses' dance through the mysteries of nine and eight, and the reader have taken his allusion.

At the end of his *Metaphysics*, Aristotle also makes an explicit reference to some details of the epic dance. He likens certain current thinkers to the ancient Homericists (οἱ ἀρχαῖοι Ὁμηρικοί), in that they observe small similarities (ὁμοιότητες) but overlook large ones. What this deficiency might mean with reference to the Homericists—together with the question of who they were, and whether they were ancient or merely quaint—is not entirely clear; David Ross in his commentary suggests that they were allegorizing interpreters of Homer, and lists some possible suspects as Pherecydes of Syros (*c.*600–525), Theagenes of Rhegium (*fl.* 525), Metrodorus of Lampsacus (d. 464), Anaxagoras (*c.*500–427), and Democritus (*fl.* 420).[3]

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[2] Elsewhere I argue that 'turning between them' may refer to a process of continued interpolation of arithmetic and harmonic means that successively approximate the irrational geometric mean in the double interval (the 'square root' of two); see A. P. David, 'Plato and the Measure of the Incommensurable, Part I: The Paradigms of Theaetetus', *St John's Review*, 46: 1 (2000).

[3] W. D. Ross, *Aristotle's* Metaphysics: *A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary*, 2 vols., London: Oxford University Press, 1958, ii. 498.

Among his contemporary targets, however, the author of the *Epino-mis* is surely one, as Aristotle's example makes clear:

λέγουσι δέ τινες ὅτι πολλὰ τοιαῦτα, οἷον αἵ τε μέσαι ἡ μὲν ἐννέα ἡ δὲ ὀκτώ, καὶ τὸ ἔπος δεκαεπτά, ἰσάριθμον τούτοις, βαίνεται δ' ἐν μὲν τῷ δεξιῷ ἐννέα συλλαβαῖς, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἀριστερῷ ὀκτώ. (1093ᵃ29–ᵇ1)

Some of them say there are many such [correspondences]; for example, of the means [in the 'double' interval 12:6], one is nine, one is eight, and the *epos* is seventeen—equal to them in number—and it is stepped on the right with nine syllables, and on the left with eight.

We see once more the division of the hexameter into parts of nine and eight syllables. It is apparent from the citations in a note by Samuel Bassett that scholars of the nineteenth century noticed this passage, and a majority of them, following Bonitz, had interpreted the spatial description in terms of the written composition of verse.[4] Since the left hand side comes first in Greek writing, Aristotle *really* means to say that the division of the syllables is into eight plus nine, and he can be seen to be referring to the trochaic caesura, which divides the epic line at this point. Such a reference, if genuine, would have been invaluable to such scholars, who could not otherwise find anyone who noticed the caesura before Aristides Quintilianus in the third century CE. Bassett refutes this reading of the passage, however, citing Herodotus on battle formations (see 6.111), Aristotle himself on the physical analysis of motion (*Historia Animalium* 498ᵇ, *De incessu animalium* 705ᵇ, *De caelo* 285ᵇ), and the universal opinion of Greek and Latin metricians, that movement begins on the right. The order of the words straightforwardly asserts that nine on the right are followed by eight on the left; and this is explicitly the way that the scholiast on the passage understands the mechanism with respect to the stichic hexameter line. Neither text appears to refer to the caesura.

Βαίνεται (or *ἐμβαίνεται*) in this passage is usually translated by 'scanned'; this is to import the usage of Aristides back across half a millennium, and to suggest an Aristotle and a world of his time that read written verse in the manner of modern classics majors. In point

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[4] Samuel E. Bassett, ' "Right" and "Left" in the Homeric Hexameter', *Journal of Classical Philology*, 11 (1916), 458–60.

of fact, it is only for this single passage within Aristotle, along with
one from the late Aristides, that Liddell and Scott suggest the trans-
lation 'scan', in the midst of an entry that spans the whole history of
βαίνω in ancient Greek. ἐμβαίνειν is used by Bacchius in its most
literal sense, to signify the stepping out of a metrical foot, and there is
no reason to think that Aristotle meant anything different. For a
more contemporary parallel, see Plato's *Alcibiades I*, where Socrates
says that when one sings, sometimes one needs to play the harp and
step to the song (κιθαρίζειν ποτὲ πρὸς τὴν ᾠδὴν καὶ βαίνειν, 108a);
he later describes the art of the Muses, which Alcibiades calls
μουσική, as the art of harping and singing and stepping (ἐμβαίνειν)
correctly (108c). It is therefore reasonable to suppose that βαίνεται
means 'is stepped out' or 'footed' here in Aristotle; and that right and
left do not refer to areas of a written page, nor even necessarily to
spatial regions, but most obviously and literally to our physical feet.
This is not to say that the hexameter was danced on one foot for nine
syllables and the other for eight; the epic round was not an epic hop.
The sense, I would suggest, is that the first part of the movement
was led off on the right foot, while the second was led off on the left.
A quick calculation in the binary arithmetic of human feet shows that
if the first sequence of nine steps begins on the right foot, the next
sequence of eight will begin on the left; while the whole movement
comes to its cadence (κατάληξις) on the right foot.

Note well that Aristotle speaks of the syllable as a thing that one
treads. This usage, where a syllable is a measure of a *dance*, is a
welcome and long-missing complement to the notion of a 'foot' as a
measure of poetic *speech*. The syllable as the unit of dance provides the
essential link between movement and word in choral lyric. But it is
important also to note that this formula does not hold for epic. By no
means do all epic lines have seventeen syllables. Whereas in lyric the
dancer and the poet were integrated, the sequence of syllable lengths
of itself supplying the dance pattern, in epic the poet was apparently
an accompanist whose speech rhythm was syncopated with the inde-
pendent rhythm of the dance. There had always to be a long syllable to
coincide with the strong step of the foot; but in the weak part of the
dactylic foot, the epic bard could sing a single long syllable while
the dancers made two steps. Both of these passages would seem to
demand that the epic dance was essentially a thing of seventeen parts

(δεκαεπτά); but it is a category mistake to call these parts syllables. Aristotle was probably influenced by the usage of choral lyric, where the identity of syllable and step is almost complete.

His slip is instructive, however, in pointing up the distinction between epic and lyric, and in the analysis of epic itself. It suggests that there is in epic an essential relation between syllable and step, but also that there is an independence of status between the two, and therefore between the poet's verses and the dance of the Muses. The passages require that an epic line was in some sense a seventeen-part thing, danced in nine and eight; but both authors must have been aware that an epic line can have as few as twelve syllables. It is apparent that one could not simply dance Homer's syllables, as perhaps one could Pindar's, but that one could dance *to* them; and that if one considers the ἔπος as dance and the ἔπος as versified speech, in their proper compositional rank (i.e. in the order of ποίησις), the basal material is in fact the dance, to which the syllables are sung as an accompaniment. It is the dance in nine and eight that is the invariant element by which one characterizes the ἔπος, and against which the poet, with freedom under metrical law, composes his verses.

The antiquity and the authority of these passages, from the *Epinomis* and the *Metaphysics*, must begin to carry their weight with modern Homerists. By themselves they establish that epic verse was, in some direct sense, dance verse; and this is enough to establish Homer as a very peculiar poet, even among his successors in the so-called 'epic' genre. Metre for Homer was not a primarily stylistic, linguistic phenomenon, as it was for Virgil, or Apollonius of Rhodes; Homer's epic metre was a concrete reality expressed through the feet, that could be performed by dancers in the round, with a distinctive rhythmic structure of its own (in nine and eight). On the face of it, on the basis of these two passages, and without a necessity of recourse to modern comparates or a new theory of the accent, what are nowadays perceived as peculiarities in Homer's style must be interpreted and understood in terms of the peculiar orchestic origins of his verse, in dactylic foot and ring-dance form. This would be to base an approach to Homeric criticism, almost for the first time in the modern era, upon the solidity of ancient testimony.

More can yet be said of nine and eight. The testimony is opaque as to its rationale, yet all the same definite and first-hand: the hexameter

dance was seen by authoritative native informants to break into two segments of nine and eight. We do not know why the dance of the Muses should be divided in this way, because our informants do not tell us, nor do these passages in any sense paint a picture of the performance. But the fact of this reported division in the dance, which does not correspond to any observed caesura or diaeresis, is indeed valuable for our analysis of the dynamic structure of its verbal accompaniment. Consider the metrical structure of the first nine steps:

$$— \underset{\smile\smile}{} \; — \underset{\smile\smile}{} \; — \underset{\smile\smile}{}$$

If this group of dactylic feet was experienced in some sense as a unit within the danced ἔπος there must have been some feeling of closure or cadence in the third foot that set off the group from the following feet. This cadence would naturally have fallen on the strong part, or thesis, of the third foot.

By thesis I shall always mean the long downbeat that bears the ictus of the rhythm; arsis will refer to the weak part of the foot, whether it precedes the downbeat in an ascending rhythm, or follows it, as in the dactyl, in a descending rhythm. What does cadence mean? The basic notion for Greek poetry would have to be the conjunction of accentual prominence and metrical ictus, creating a moment of musical arrival. But moments of arrival must be spaced apart, from moments of inception and moments of transition, if they are at all to be experienced as arrivals; and if every metrical thesis were stressed, the feeling of cadence would be muted. In addition, cadence could not occur randomly or unexpectedly (unless for the sake of effect); there needs to be created a pattern of expectation. Hence there is an essential musical paradox at the heart of the phenomenon: ictus could not itself be marked without regular reinforcement from accent (especially in verse without a basis in dance and the independent energy of the foot), but the phenomenon of cadence requires the singling out of a particular thesis recurrently, and suitably apart in time from a previous one. In other words, the sensation of metre requires the regular recurrence of the thesis, and so poetry requires its reinforcement, but the phenomenon of cadence which metre serves requires a distinguishing of one thesis from its neighbours, at more-or-less symmetrical intervals. There may also be a

variety of cadences with different rhythmic consequences. A masculine cadence is the culmation of an ascending rhythm; a feminine one maintains a descending pattern; but in the context of a dactyl in midline, both kinds would leave a syllable or two unused in the arsis, which would then be heard to precede the following thesis rather than trail their own one, and so modulate the rhythm at that point towards ascent.

Such a cadence in the hexameter, at the beginning of the third foot, on the seventh step of the dance, would be a cadence on the right leg; hence this section of the dance would not only lead off, but also cadence on the right foot. When we come to our analysis of the prosody of the epic line, we should therefore expect to find a significant accentual prominence placed upon the downbeat of the third foot, if in fact the ictus and divisions of the dance had some influence on the shape of the bard's phrases, and if, conversely, the accentual harmony of these phrases came to agreement with the rhythmic ictus at points of cadence. This expectation amounts to a testable prediction. If such a point of agreement in cadence at the third foot was to be perceived as a point of *emphasis*, then disagreement in the first and second feet must be present in order to *de-emphasize* the preceding theses. This expectation of a lack of reinforcement in the first two feet of the line, or of reinforcement of the wrong kind or in the wrong place, also amounts to a testable prediction.

The next eight steps, 'on the left', have the following metrical shape:

$$— \cup\cup — \cup\cup — \times$$

Again, we should expect a sense of closure in the last foot to mark off the phrase, not to say the whole line; if the cadence falls on the thesis of the foot, this second group would begin and also cadence on the left foot. The doubtfulness of the quantity of the last syllable suggests the presence of a rhythmic ambiguity, however. The last step of the line, on the right leg, could be the catalectic step. Even though this step is in the weak part of the final foot, it could gain some emphasis from being the last step in the dance, and from being on the right foot. In other words, in the last foot of a line in descending rhythm, there is going to be a tension between the thesis of the foot and the element that is actually final, as to which provides true closure to the

line. One could see this as a tension intrinsic to reinforcing a line in descending rhythm: between maintaining the descending character by stressing the final thesis, or stressing the ultimate element of the line so as to produce the finality of an ascending cadence. The latter option, moving to an ascending rhythm, is a modulation that is required (by a long final) in the trochaic tetrameter catalectic.

We might therefore expect a variability in the scheme of accentual agreement for the last foot of the epic line, if it were a locus of rhythmic choice for the poet, and we can predict no more than that there will be accentual reinforcement in *some* part of the foot. (We can still speak of a prediction in terms of the new theory of the accent, however, for such a regular reinforcement of the last foot is by no means evident from the location of the *written* accent marks.) The doubtfulness of the final syllable answers this expectation. It suggests that the poet could stress either the first or the second element of the final foot, without violating any rhythmic logic; he would therefore be free to end his line in either a descending or an ascending rhythm. Such an intrinsic rhythmic variety may have been a key to the survival of the epic line as a euphonic form of expression, long after it was dissociated from the epic dance.

B. THE συρτός

If epic verse and dance did in fact go their separate ways, what happened to the dance? Did the practice of solo recitals of Homer signal the obsolescence of the dance of the Muses? Or did the epic dance submerge again into folk tradition, and continue to survive? If there were some modern parallel for the epic dance, or even some modern descendant that has survived independently of the long-dead poetic tradition, it should prove invaluable in our analysis of epic rhythm. Here is Thrasybulos Georgiades, the distinguished musicologist, in *Greek Music, Verse and Dance* (translated from the German):

the ancient rhythm inherent in *musike* seems to have been so deeply engraved on the human soul that it was able to survive in its own right

even after the unity, *musike*, had disintegrated. When the ancient, solid body of old Greek, of *musike*, shrank and transformed itself into western language, it left behind a husk, which began to lead its own life, as it were, and became 'music' and purely musical rhythm, independent of language. That is the explanation why a stratum of folk music, built according to the old Greek principle of juxtaposition of longs and shorts, is found in modern Greece. It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the importance of this music for the investigation and reconstruction of the ancient Greek rhythm and *musike*: in vain does the philologist seek access to the rhythm of Greek verse … To the musician familiar with modern Greek folk music, however, a pathway is suddenly opened to ancient Greek language—access from this area naturally could never have been expected by philologists.

It is perhaps now unusual even in musicology to speak in terms of the soul, but an empirical account of the continued use of uniquely complex quantitative dance rhythms in lands where Greek is spoken requires the presence—perhaps even apart from the direct descent of populations—of some kind of substrate, tied to the land, endowed with the capacity of memory. Georgiades proceeds to identify the living descendant of the epic rhythm:

in modern Greece this rhythm not only exists but is a regular and everyday phenomenon. It is the rhythm of the most popular Greek folk dance even today, of the typical Greek round dance, the *syrtós kalamatianós*. Here we find not only the rhythm as described in detail by the ancient rhythmic theorists, but we find it as the rhythm of the round dance, exactly as the ancients tell us.[5]

Unfortunately the time relation between long and short in the καλαματιανός is 3:2. While Georgiades is intrigued as a musicologist in the possibility of this ratio in Homer's rhythm—and Dionysius of Halicarnassus testifies that the ancient rhythmicians used to describe the long in a dactyl as shorter than a 'perfect' long (*De Compositione Verborum* 17)—Plato himself seems strongly to imply that the 'up and down' segments (perhaps the arsis and the thesis) in a dactyl are equal in length (*Republic* 400b). In any case, a 3:2 ratio would make something of a chaos out of the rules of the hexameter's regularity: a substituted long in the weak part of the foot would be longer by 4:3,

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[5] Thrasybulos Georgiades, *Greek Music, Verse and Dance*, tr. Erwin Benedikt and Marie Louise Martinez, New York: Merlin Press, 1956, 129–31.

on this scheme, than a long syllable in the strong, tonic position. The name συρτός seems to be used all over Greece for local ring dances; there is a dance, called simply συρτός, which is identical in form to the καλαματιανός, but which is stepped in the ratio 2:1 of long to short. Binary rhythm is apparently characteristic of folk dance in insular Greece, which is supposed to have been Homer's Greece, and hence the seat of the Ionic ἔπος; while ternary and 7/8 rhythms, such as that of the καλαματιανός, are characteristic of the continent.[6] The συρτός in binary rhythm is therefore the best candidate for identification with the epic dance. (The καλαματιανός rhythm, meanwhile, was identified by the pioneering ethnomusicologist, Samuel Baud-Bovy, with the ancient epitrite.)

The name itself, συρτός, carries the stamp of antiquity; a Boeotian inscription from the first century CE refers to the dance of the συρτοί. While this is a late date in relation to Homeric or classical times, the dance has apparently survived for nearly two millennia since then, and what is more, it is referred to, even in the first-century inscription, as the πάτριος ὄρχησις: the dance of the forefathers. (Taken as descriptive rather than limiting, the adjective πάτριος yields an even more intriguing sense: the dance of the ancestry, that is, the catalogue dance.) This dance is nowadays pan-Hellenic; perhaps this was anciently the case as well, while the name συρτός was peculiar to Boeotia. This dactylic round dance of the twenty-first century clearly has a prodigious history.

The survival of the συρτός rhythm, a memory preserved in the dancing feet of the Greeks, independent of its poetic and musical accompaniments, is a tale unto itself:

The modern melodies of the *syrtós* are certainly not as old as its rhythm. They correspond to different stages of history. The rhythm itself, however, is like the original casting mold from which all these melodies have been shaped. It is like a fixed formula, deeply engraved upon the soul of the Greek folk and therefore protected against any caprices of weather and influence of time—in this respect it differs from more labile melodies. The indestructible nature of this rhythm, in the first instance, stems from its relation to the human body as dance; one is tempted, however, to explain it

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[6] Notes to sound recording, 'Grèce: Chansons et danses populaires, Collection Samuel Baud-Bovy', by Lámbros Liávas, VDE-GALLO, 1984, 33.

through the original relation of the rhythm to the word, to derive it from the time when this totality was rooted in the soul through the epos. The rhythm was given through the round dance and through the word, it was an unequivocal and immutable *Gestalt*. The melodic superstructure, on the other hand, was alterable and not as capable of resistance. We do not believe that one could find a parallel phenomenon in western history, a rhythm which lies outside of the melodic–harmonic development, that is, a rhythm which remained untouched by it.[7]

It would seem that the epic bard was but the earliest known accompanist to this dance; and that the rhythm and divisions of the dance are what served for him as the 'casting mould' for the rhythm and length of his poetic phrases. It was this mould, and not the word, which had the sovereignty; in the phenomenon of 'metrical lengthening' of a syllable in the strong part of the foot, and a corresponding phenomenon of 'metrical shortening' in the arsis, we see a demonstration of this subservience of the word to the rhythm at the level of the syllable. Before one can make critical claims about the peculiar structure of Homeric phraseology and narrative, therefore, one must first gain a critical appreciation of the fine structure of its casting mould; one must understand metrical constraints, not as opaque linguistic stylizations, but in their literal reality, as the constraints imposed upon speech by dance. Of course we can never be sure that the modern Greek συρτός is the dance of the Muses, or even that it is the same as the ancient συρτός; but if we want to advance beyond the formula, 'nine and eight on right and left, with cadence in the third foot, and a choice of cadence in the sixth', in our attempt to reconstruct the epic round dance, we must move beyond the ancient testimony and seek some clues in the surviving modern tradition of folk dancing in Greece. Such a tradition, based as it still is on the juxtaposition of longs and shorts, on a quantitative structure, may well represent the survival into modern times, independent of language, of the ancient metrical reality. Georgiades is a witness to inspire some confidence in this approach:

The two phenomena, the old and the new, the rhythm of Homer and that of the round dance of modern Greece, testify to identical attitudes and have common roots. Here we deal with a similarity founded within, with a relationship anchored in physically experienced movement. Watching this

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[7] Georgiades, *Greek Music, Verse and Dance*, 138–9.

syrtós kalamatianós, or taking part in the dancing (in the open air, of course), one feels the ancient tradition in the attitude of the dancers. They exhibit a dignity otherwise foreign to them; their faces become mask-like. It is as though an otherwise buried level of consciousness is revealed. In this round dance a force is at work which actually holds the people together and joins them as though under one cupola. The dancers convey a primeval tradition which has been deeply stamped, as it were, upon their very souls; their reverence for their forefathers and their unity with them become manifest. What a concentration of meaning and of vigor this dance must have possessed in the time of its blossoming to persist with such tenacity to this day, to exercise such power over millennia![8]

This persistence of Greek metres must not be understood as the survival of the conventional stylizations of a language without the language, like the smile without the Cheshire cat; rather, metres have survived in Greece because in their origin they are extra-linguistic— impressions of the foot, not expressions of the voice. It is only in the classical period of Greek history that one saw the intimate conjunction of metre and language, dance and vocal harmony, in the art form known as χορεία. With the emergence of the lyric genre, for the only time in the long history of Greek metre did the word take over a limited sovereignty; the sequence of words in their rhythm and meaning became itself the casting mould for the dancing steps and the gestures of the imitative σχήματα. Each lyric μέλος created its own, unique rhythmic context through the words of the opening round, or strophe. Even here, however, the sequence of fixed syllabic quantities had to make sense as a circle dance, had to be interpretable as a succession of feet; in the composition of the antistrophe, this sequence of feet was once again an independent reality with which the words had to be harmonized, with all the skill of the lyric genius. In lyric as well, therefore, a sequence of feet comes to have a life of its own, and must be comprehensible as dance, independent of the word. (We shall discuss more fully the peculiarities of lyric orches- tration in Chapter 8.) The difference in epic, as a species of χορεία, is one of compositional hierarchy: the sequence of feet is given to the poet by the dancers in the traditional round, while in lyric, the sequence is first taught the dancers by the poet, through his words.

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[8] Ibid. 139–40.

Let us turn now to the form of the συρτός. The basic steps take four measures, the first two in a travelling step and the second two in what is called a pausing step in place, which involves a retrogression. The sequence can be expanded to six or eight or more, simply by adding travelling steps and pausing steps, at the end of which the whole sequence can be repeated indefinitely as the dancers proceed in the round. The modern συρτός appears to attach no special significance to a six-measure period; if it is to be identified with the epic dance, it would seem that only in the era when it was bound up with the verse of a chanting bard did the six-measure format (as opposed to four- or eight-) come into its own as a period that suited the aesthetic requirements of a poetic accompaniment. To judge from the modern descriptions, in terms of travelling and pausing steps, a six-beat συρτός might as well be considered a trimeter (with two feet per metron) as a hexameter. The fact that the dance of the Muses was not so viewed in classical times should not debar us from an identification, however. In the ancient world, the epic line of verse and dance was viewed in at least two radically different ways. In the first case, as for example in Herodotus, the poetic verse is referred to as hexametric, that is, as composed of six dance measures. (The terms 'penthemimeral' and 'hepthemimeral', in Aristides Quintilianus, imply a twelve-part object, albeit twelve 'halves'.) In the second, the epic *dance* is described in Aristotle as a *two*-part thing, of seventeen elements divided into nine on the right and eight on the left, where these elements are *syllables*. The latter description bespeaks a centuries-long cross-pollination, arising from the association between the dance of the Muses and the epic song, such that by the time of Aristotle the two were perceived to be mutually definitive in their structure. But the former description merely in terms of six dactyls suggests a more independent and abstract relation of dance to verse, and the existence of two such synchronic descriptions of the relation, both ancient, and with almost no overlap in content, suggests the presence of an independent matrix which was interpreted and to some extent even intuited in terms of its monodic accompaniment. It is at least intelligible that with the demise of the ancient world— and perhaps even earlier, with the demise of the living tradition of epic composition as accompaniment—the underlying dance, a diachronically invariant matrix, could have continued to survive;

Table 4.1. *A six-measure* syrtós. *(Starting position: feet together facing obliquely right.)*

Foot	Step	Tempo	Travelling Step to the Right. Begin on right foot
1	1	slow	Step to the Right on the right foot.
	2	quick	Step to the Right on the left foot slightly behind right.
	3	quick	Step to the Right on the right foot.
			Continue Travelling Step to the Right. Begin on left foot.
2	4	slow	Step to the Right on the left foot in front of right.
	5	quick	Step to the Right on the right foot alongside left.
	6	quick	Step to the Right on the left foot in front of the right.
			Pausing Step in place. Begin on right foot.
3	7	slow	Step to the Right on right foot.
	8	quick	Step in front of right foot on the left foot.
	9	quick	Shift weight from left foot back onto right foot, which steps back into place.
			Continue Pausing Step in place. Begin on left foot.
4	10	slow	Step diagonally backwards to the Left on the left foot.
	11	quick	Step diagonally backwards on the right foot behind left foot.
	12	quick	Shift weight from right foot back onto left foot, which steps forward into its former place.
			Resume Travelling Step. Begin on right foot.
5	13	slow	Step to the Right on the right foot.
	14	quick	Step to the Right on the left foot slightly behind right.
	15	quick	Step to the Right on the right foot.
			End Travelling Step
6	16	slow	Step to the Right on the left foot in front of right.
	17	quick	Step to the Right on the right foot alongside left.
		(rest)	*(Prepare to begin the next period, once again with a Travelling Step to the Right on the right foot.)*

no longer interpreted as 'epic', dissociated even from a hexametric structure, but still truly a 'dance of the forefathers'.

Table 4.1 is a description of a six-measure συρτός, adapted from *Greek Dances* by Ted Petrides; in his words, 'in addition to the simple enjoyment of the steps and the music there is a rare sense of human continuity in the experience of dancing a dance the ancient Greeks were performing 2,000 years ago'.[9] The reader is encouraged to get on his feet and feel the rhythm. These are small sacrifices for art. The only point of ambiguity comes at the end of the period. Since the seventeenth step is on the right foot, I have assumed that the sixth measure is completed by a rest, which would allow the dancers to

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[9] Ted Petrides, *Greek Dances*, Athens: Lycabettus Press, 1975, 73–4.

shift their weight, enough to begin again on the right foot in the next period. Alternatively, the dancers might have danced a full dactyl, and so ended with an eighteenth step on the left. (This method has proved the most satisfying to intuition in the course of an experiment.[10]) For the singer, however, if the seventeenth step is slow rather than quick—that is, if the doubtful syllable is long and therefore accented, producing an ascending, masculine cadence—any pause for breath might have to be hypermetrical. The nature of this hypermetricality may have depended on the conditions of the performance. The rhapsodic actor, for example, could have inserted a rest of a whole foot after the true spondee in the 'will' of Zeus (Διὸς δ᾽ ἐτελείετο βουλή), thereby giving us a seven-foot line, and introducing anisometric prime numbers into the rhythmic progression (seven and thirteen) such as are also notable in English iambic pentameters (in which case extralinear pauses can create foot-cycles of eleven and seventeen[11]). But the lyric bard who supplied a backbeat for isometric dancers may have been obliged to shorten the final element of a true spondee—although it could still be stressed—in order to regularize the sequence in sixes. (Note that in the case of the elegiac couplet, there need be no shift of weight at the end of the hexameter; the pentameter thus begins on the left foot, but will end on the right, and the end of the whole couplet is the true boundary point of the elegiac period.)

The συρτός is a self-sustaining movement. It has its own points of tension and release. Georgiades describes the καλαματιανός as having a characteristic 'give and take' quality to its rhythm, 'a play between standing still and pressing forward, a peculiar fluctuation'. He finds this effect to be heightened by the temporal relation of long and short in the καλαματιανός foot, which is 3:2; but the effect should be evident to a dancer in the binary συρτός as well. He goes on:

As one dances this round, one feels the elastic quality of this rhythm, but at the same time the static–loose juxtaposition of the individual temporal

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[10] In a series of performances entitled Χορεία Μουσῶν, with choreographer Miriam Rother and the St John's Χορευταί, at St John's College, Annapolis, 2001–3.

[11] Elliott Zuckerman, 'On Measuring Verse', in *Essays in Honor of Jacob Klein*, ed. Curtis Wilson, Annapolis: St John's College Press, 1976, 201–11, esp. 211.

units. A 'give and take' is expressed also by the succession of steps on a larger scale: several steps forward, then a hesitation and a few steps backward.[12]

This dance cannot function merely as a metre, in the modern sense of a time signature; the συρτός is rather a fully fledged and realized rhythm. If there is even a general similarity between the ancient and modern movements, the syncopation of epic verse and dance must have sounded like an interweaving and counterpointing of independent strands, rather than an improvisation against a drone. We should not be surprised to find the stress points of the verse merely matching the motion of the dance at times, without syncopation, and discovering not monotony but rhythm, not unison but give and take.

Two moments appear to stand out as turning points in the movement of the συρτός. The sense of the motion is consistent through the eighth step; the body's impetus is circling towards the right. The first shift in this impetus occurs between the eighth and ninth steps: the dancers arrest their rightward motion in the middle of the third foot, and step back to the left, as the travelling step gives way to the pausing step in place. We have concluded, based on ancient testimony, that there was a division in the hexameter dance between the first nine (on the right) and the following eight steps (on the left), or between the third and the fourth foot, and that we should expect to find this division marked by a prosodic cadence on the thesis of the third foot. We now see also the possibility of a typical division in the arsis of the third foot, on the evidence of the modern συρτός, between the eighth and ninth steps of the seventeen. This is the point which marks the beginning of the dancers' retrogression.

The heart of the retrogression is the thesis of the fourth foot, step ten. There then follows, between the fourth and fifth feet, a resumption of the rightward movement. This point of resumption is the second moment of orchestic turn. It begins in the arsis of the fourth foot and comes to a head in the thesis of the fifth (step thirteen), where one has regained the ground lost by the retrogression—one's steps have been retraced—and which is the beginning of a new travelling step to the right. We might therefore expect the sense of a new beginning here, insofar as the verse will allow it.

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[12] Georgiades, *Greek Music, Verse and Dance*, 135.

We have now gathered the ancient and the modern evidence. It is impressive how far one's sense of the aesthetics of Homer's χορεία, in its totality, is already given through the analysis of its rhythmic element. The analysis of epic harmony will consummate the picture, but we shall be illuminating a stage that is already set. The harmonic analysis will teach us a finer appreciation for Homer's music. It is also a first application and test for the new theory of the Greek accent. But the soul of Homer's poetry—I do not mean of the tale but of the telling, not the μῦθος but the ἔπος—as she manifests herself in ring composition within linear narrative, in recurrence and the conjuring power of signature lines and epithet phrases, in the distinctive sound of metrical diction—the soul is born in dance.

C. EXPECTATIONS OF 'AGREEMENT' AND 'DISAGREEMENT'

On Plato's cue, we should expect a movement from disagreement to agreement between prosody and ictus to be the hallmark of a period in the verse. The ancients appear to have experienced the hexameter in two sub-periods of nine units and eight. We should on these grounds predict a trend towards disagreement between accent and ictus in the first, second, and fourth measures, and emphatic agreement in the thesis of the third and sixth. The fifth measure also should be a locus of de-emphasis, immediately preceding the final emphasis, but the fact of the bucolic diaeresis suggests that something anomalous may have gone on here.

What ought we to mean by 'agreement' in the context of epic verse? The point of departure for the new theory of the accent was to recognize the 'heavy' element of the Greek contonation, a downglide, as prosodically prominent whenever it occurred on a long syllable. The barytone is thus the prominence of prominences: it combines a downward pitch change with long duration, and it dominates over the rise whenever it occurs. The rise in the voice, on the other hand, occurs over only one mora, and an oxytone prominence arises only when the syllable following is short, or before a pause. Hence we shall associate 'agreement' with the coincidence of

barytonic stress and metrical ictus. There are only two shapes of barytonic word possible in Greek: barytone on the penult and barytone on the ultima. Hence for a given thesis we have the possibility of either feminine or masculine barytonic reinforcement, either of which constitutes 'agreement'. Given the shape of a dactyl, this reinforcement by barytones necessitates a caesura in the third foot, either masculine (penthemimeral) or feminine (trochaic); hence my theory, based on the descriptions in Plato and Aristotle and a new theory of the accent, *predicts both types of the third-foot caesura in the dactylic hexameter.*

Let us now consider 'disagreement' as an umbrella term covering all the other permutations of coincidence. 'Disagreement', unlike 'agreement', will therefore admit of degrees. The most flagrant case would be a barytonic stress on the arsis. Any sort of prominence on the arsis would constitute 'disagreement', however. A milder form of disagreement would be represented by a simple lack of the expected reinforcement of the thesis. Mildest of all, to the point of stretching the category, would be reinforcement of the thesis by an oxytone. Such oxytonic reinforcement usually occurs in words of dactylic termination that are oxytone on the antepenult, e.g. οὕνεκα (*Iliad* 1.11). This example occurs in the first foot; other examples near the beginning of the *Iliad* are ἑλώρια (1.4), ἠτίμασεν (11), and λίσσετο (15) in the fourth foot, and ἐτελείετο (5) and κοσμήτορε (16) in the fifth. While it is certainly strange to claim that dactylic prosodic reinforcement constitutes a case of 'disagreement', what we are distinguishing in this way is the special cadential emphasis on the thesis produced by barytonic reinforcement, which also necessitates a cutting of the foot (caesura) and hence a rhythmic modulation. The dactylic oxytonic reinforcement precisely does *not* produce any emphasis on the thesis, or a modulating pause; there is in this case, rather, a mere coincidence of accent and ictus, a dactylic conjunction without emphasis. Hence this case allows us to distinguish an 'emphatic' agreement of accent and ictus. Sometimes, however, an oxytone on the ultima before a pause can deliver a masculine cadence (e.g. θεά, 1.1, at the caesura, and βουλή, 1.5, at line end). Such pre-pausal, long-final oxytones, when they occur on a thesis (producing caesura) or at line end, should therefore be considered as causing

Table 4.2. *Agreement and disagreement*

Agreement (Emphasis)	Disagreement (De-emphasis)
Barytone on thesis	Barytone or oxytone on arsis
Long-final, pre-pausal oxytone on thesis	Neutral thesis (including grave) Non-final oxytone on thesis

'emphatic agreement', in addition to the two barytonic reinforcements, as in Table 4.2.

Taking a cue from the form of a modern συρτός, we also look for some sign of the dancers' shift in direction, the beginning of the leftward retrogression, between steps eight and nine; and for a sign of rightward resumption or inception between the fourth and fifth feet. Finally, we expect regular accentual reinforcement in the sixth and final foot, but we have reason to believe that the ictus in the sixth measure can fall on either the long or the doubtful syllable—which corresponds to either the dancer's left or right foot—and that this represents an integral variability in the rhythm of the line; we should therefore speak not so much of agreement at this location between accent and ictus, but of the *accentual determination of ictus*. If the first step of the ultimate foot is stressed, the rhythm of the line is resolved in a descending pattern; if the second, it ascends in a masculine cadence.

To summarize, we expect:

1. Movement from disagreement to agreement between prosody and ictus:

   (*a*) 'disagreement' (de-emphasis) in measures 1, 2, and 4
   (*b*) 'agreement' (emphasis) in the thesis of measures 3 and 6.

2. Caesura in measure 3, of two possible types due to the nature of 'agreement'.
3. A sign of the dancers' shift in direction:

   (*a*) the beginning of the leftward retrogression, between steps 8 and 9
   (*b*) rightward resumption or inception between the 4th and 5th feet.

4. Accentual determination of ictus in measure 6.

The analysis of the relation between words and metres has traditionally been conducted in terms of the relation between the ends of words and the ends of feet. This analysis has generated the familiar categories, caesura and diaeresis. It is of course my claim that the real basis for such an analysis ought to lie in the relation between word-level prosody and ictus, as in English and other known languages. But it should be noted that on these terms, the traditional analysis has some validity. It often happens, for example, that the final syllable of a word in Greek is prosodically prominent. Greek accent is a culminative feature, whose down-glide is confined to the last two syllables. But more importantly, the prosodic contonation does not cross word boundaries (except in the case of enclitics). The Greek word is therefore an integral prosodic unit, and it is likely to have had some kind of onset as well as a culmination, although the prosodic 'force' of this onset is likely to be secondary in relation to the force of the actual accent, wherever these do not coincide. The frequent suppression of accent at the end of a word (marked by the grave sign in our texts), whenever the contonation cannot be completed within the word, might itself have contributed to a feeling of 'prosodic onset' at the beginning of the word following. The most obvious example one can glean from the stream of letters that makes up our text of Homer is the fact that a fresh word marks the beginning of each hexameter period. There are no hyphens in epic. The most basic division in the metrical structure, that between successive periods, is therefore marked not by accent but by word division. Precisely because of this marking function it is likely that diaeresis in general, where the beginning of a word coincides with the beginning of a foot, has an inceptive quality.

When we look to the verbal composition that might have accompanied this dance, we expect to find some imitation of the striking shifts in the dance movement between steps eight and nine, and steps twelve and thirteen. The trochaic caesura immediately answers. Hexameter poets appear to have favoured a word division inside the third foot *which corresponds to a division, marked by a shift in weight and in the direction of circling, between the eighth and the ninth steps of the traditional round dance.* The caesura usually marks a division in the phrasing as well, so that quite literally the poet conceived his turns of phrase to match the turn in the dance. And since diaeresis has an
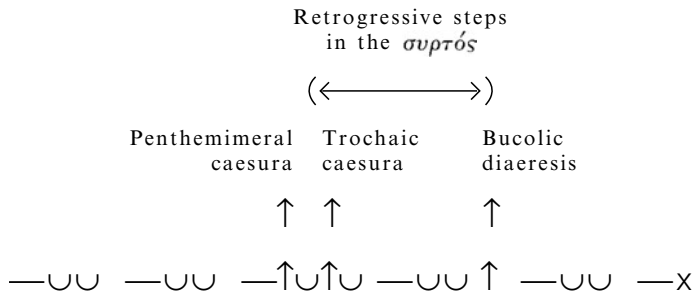
Retrogressive steps
in the συρτός

(⟵⟶)

Penthemimeral   Trochaic   Bucolic
caesura   caesura   diaeresis

↑ ↑   ↑

—∪∪ —∪∪ —↑∪↑∪ —∪∪ ↑ —∪∪ —x

Figure 4.1   The underlying rhythmic articulation of the dance of the Muses

inceptive quality, we motivate our second and most distinctive articulation: we expect a sense of rhythmic resumption between the fourth and fifth feet, because of the resumption of the travelling step between steps twelve and thirteen. *This resumptive impetus in the dance is marked verbally by the bucolic diaeresis.*

As is shown in Figure 4.1, two structural tenets of the traditional analysis, the trochaic caesura and the bucolic diaeresis, can therefore be seen to reflect the underlying rhythmic articulation of the dance of the Muses—they mark the beginning and the end of a loop of retrogression—if this dance was at all similar in its steps, as it was in its rhythm, to a modern συρτός.
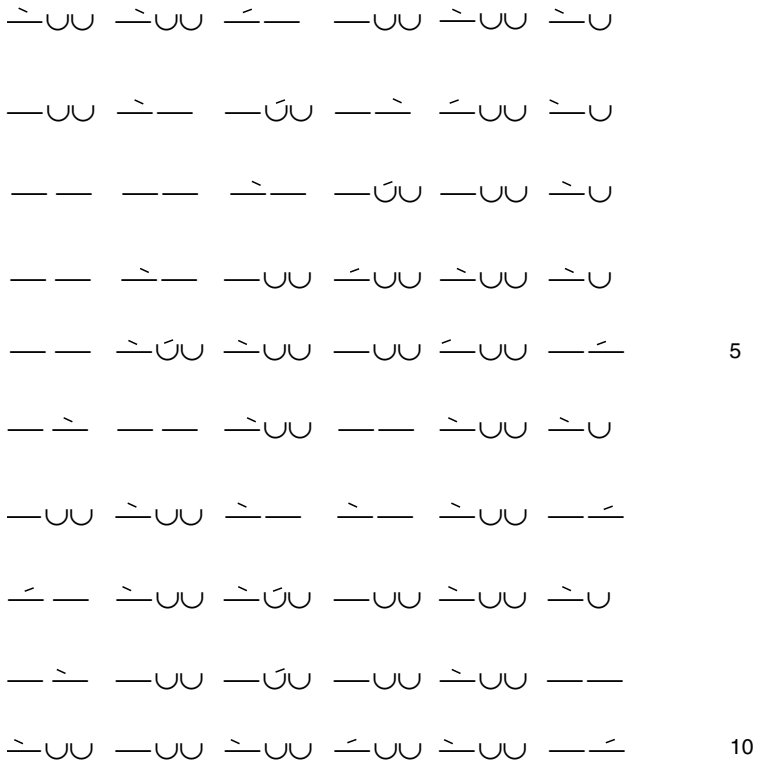
D. PROSODIC CHARTS

And now for the accent marks. What follows is a rhythmic–harmonic exposition of some samples of Homeric poetry, applying the new theory of the accent; this is in fact to take the product of Allen's analysis, which has been seen to be corroborated by an independent historical interpretation, and to apply it heuristically in a new synthesis. Where Allen induced prosodic rules by studying the ends of lines of stichic verse, now we take these rules to metrical charts of *whole lines* of verse—later we shall also look at lyric samples—to see

how Greek poetry *works*. It would be absurd to suppose that the new theory of the accent only came into play at the ends of lines. The phenomenon of agreement there has yielded a general prosody. We are now in a position to compare prosodic patterns with rhythmic patterns at the beginnings and middles of lines of Greek verse as well as the ends, and so to disclose for the first time the patterns of disagreement and agreement that characterize the movement and music of Greek poetry.

Here are the first ten lines of the *Iliad*:

> μῆνιν ἄειδε θεά, Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
> οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί᾽ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε᾽ ἔθηκε,
> πολλὰς δ᾽ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
> ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
> οἰωνοῖσί τε δαῖτα, Διὸς δ᾽ ἐτελείετο βουλή,   5
> ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
> Ἀτρείδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.
>   Τίς τ᾽ ἄρ᾽ σφωε θεῶν ἔριδι ξυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;
> Λητοῦς καὶ Διὸς υἱός· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆι χολωθεὶς
> νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὦρσε κακήν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί.   10

Below is the rhythmic–harmonic structure of these lines (Figure 4.2). The occurrence of spondees in mid-line and the distinction between spondees and trochees at line end require a separate scheme for each line. What is being compared in the chart is the progression of *vocal* quantity and vocal accent—this is where the spondees occur; it is assumed that the dancers' foot is always dactylic. Overlaid upon the actual syllabic quantities, which vary in the arsis from line to line, are the positions of the accentually prominent syllables as they are located by the new theory. I have used an acute sign to mark oxytonic prominence, a grave to mark a prominent barytone. Hence the opening phrase of line 1, μῆνιν ἄειδε θεά (quantitavely — ∪∪ — ∪∪ —) with a circumflex on the penult, followed by a post-acute barytone on the penult, followed by a pre-pausal oxytone on the ultima, yields the following rhythmic–harmonic pattern: ⌣̑ ∪∪ ⌣̑ ∪∪ ⌣́; whereas the second phrase, Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος (— — ∪∪ — ∪∪ — ∪), a post-acute barytone on the ultima followed by a circumflex on the penult, shows the following pattern: — — ∪∪ ⌣̑

‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́— —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑

—⏑⏑ ‒́— —⏑̆⏑ —‒̀ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑

—— —— ‒̀— —⏑̆⏑ —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑

—— ‒̀— —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑

—— ‒́⏑̆⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ —‒́   5

—‒̀ —— ‒́⏑⏑ —— ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑

—⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́— ‒̀— ‒́⏑⏑ —‒́

‒́— ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑̆⏑ —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑

—‒̀ —⏑⏑ —⏑̆⏑ —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ——

‒́⏑⏑ —⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ ‒́⏑⏑ —‒́   10

Figure 4.2   Prosodic Chart for *Il.* 1.1–10

⏑⏑ ‒́⏑. In line 5 an enclitic induces two prominences in a word; οἰωνοῖσί τε, barytone on the penult followed by oxytone on the ultima (because the enclitic syllable is short), yields the pattern — — ‒́ ⏑́⏑. In the same line, βουλή at line end, a prepausal, released ultimate oxytone, yields — ‒́. Where an enclitic syllable is long, as in τίς τ' ἄρ' σφωε, it can receive barytonic prominence over an immediately preceding rise: ‒́ — ‒́ ⏑. It is assumed that, with the exception of the final foot, ictus always occurs on the initial long of the foot in this descending rhythm. Hence the chart ought immediately to reveal the places of agreement and disagreement between accent and ictus. (The only ambiguity arises in the case of the

oxytones; the chart does not distinguish long-final oxytones from the other varieties, and we have suggested that only this species of oxytone produces 'emphatic agreement' in the thesis.) There is sometimes need of judgement in laying out such a scheme. I read μάχεσθαι, for example, as barytone on the penult in this metrical context, rather than oxytone on the antepenult, which it might possibly have been in prose.

It would seem that a once hidden order of disagreement and agreement has been revealed. As we had predicted, there is a tendency against accenting the thesis of the first and the fourth foot, and there are examples of accenting the arsis in these cases. Hence there is a tendency toward 'disagreement' between accent and ictus at the beginning of a period (or sub-period), manifested either by a lack of accent in the foot or an accent in the arsis in conflict with the ictus. In this sample, although not generally as we shall see, the second thesis seems often to be a place of 'agreement' (six times out of ten), either as an automatic consequence of a lack of stress in the syllables of the first foot, or as an effect of *enjambement*. In general, these opening lines of the *Iliad* are dominated by barytonic stresses. In the sixth foot there is a prominent syllable nine times out of ten; all of them constitute cases of 'agreement' as I have defined the term; we find an expected variation between a descending and an ascending resolution. But only four times is there a *written* accent mark: hence the new theory has bridged the written legacy and Allen's prosody, to yield a result that makes musical sense.

But we must highlight the most important disclosure in this analytic chart of *Iliad* 1.1–10: the clear evidence of a tendency towards rhythmic-prosodic 'agreement' not just at the end of the line, where one should expect it in any case, but also in the third foot, where its presence confirms the descriptions of the epic dance in the *Epinomis* and the *Metaphysics*. In the third foot as well, there is agreement seven times out of ten. This phenomenon amounts to a discovery. The first three feet of the hexameter appear to constitute a period, or sub-period, within the line, which is defined by a tonal cadence in the thesis of the third foot. Here on display in the hexameter is what we have seen Plato imply (*Timaeus* 80a), that there are *two* moments of agreement in the course of a single orchestic counterpoint between accent and rhythm.

The phenomenon of caesura in hexameter must now be rethought: it must be seen as an automatic consequence of the desire to accent the thesis of the third foot. Such a desire need not even be connected to the form of an extrinsic dance—the desire to produce a mid-line cadence can be paralleled in many other stichic lines. Caesura results from the prosodic shapes that produce a sense of agreement in ancient Greek, a concrete musical motivation; not from a need to pour words into metrical moulds inherited from some unknown tradition. Barytonic prominence placed on the third thesis, producing either a masculine or a feminine cadence at that point of the line, entails either a penthemimeral or a trochaic caesura. That is why there are the two of them. That is why these word breaks exist in the hexameter.

No one in the ancient world seems to have noticed the caesura prior to Aristides Quintilianus. Why is it that only moderns were capable of noticing such an obvious phenomenon? Note that while the caesurae are a fact of the hexameter line, they are likely to have been considered secondary facts by those who were familiar with the original orchestic and musical motivations to the verbal accompaniment. Hence they would not have been the obvious articulations for ancient critics that they seem to be to moderns, who register and solemnize an abstract, atonal and merely quantitative conjunction of metre and language. Those original motivations were a desire for barytonic reinforcement of the third thesis—a reinforcement that by no means always corresponds with word endings—combined with a desire to reflect the beginning of a retrogression in the movement which favours the feminine reinforcement over the masculine. Verbal 'cuts' in the third foot are therefore merely a necessary by-product of these larger musical desiderata, phenomena whose registration surely would have been uppermost in living performance, and also in the ancient reception of the textual record of such performance.

The feminine cadence, barytone on the penult with a descending rhythm—such as that shown by $\pi\rho\hat{\omega}\tau\alpha$ in the third foot (1.6), or $Ἀχιλῆος$ and $ἔθηκε$ at the ends of the first two lines—is the prevalent form in Homer. As we have seen, such a cadence in the third foot has in fact a double motivation from the perspective of the dance: it reinforces the ictus, bringing the first segment of the $ἔπος$ to a

right-foot cadence; and it insures that there will be a caesura, so that a
new word begins in the middle of the third arsis, to correspond with
the beginning of the retrogression in the ninth step of the *συρτός*. It is
this double motivation that accounts for a favouring of the feminine
cadence over the masculine. The latter does occur regularly in the
third foot: it fulfils the first function, the 'function' of agreement, and
yields the penthemimeral caesura. But this caesura is not as perfectly
respondent to the dance, in that it does not also mark the beginning
of the retrogression.

Words of a dactylic shape cannot occur in the sixth foot, but
neither do they appear in the third, and their exclusion there must
reflect a conscious aesthetic. There is in fact a triple motive, an
overdetermination, against such placement: (1) a dactylic termin-
ation in the third foot ignores the turn in the dance; (2) it could only
reinforce this closing foot of the period with an oxytone; and (3) it
would produce a diaeresis after the third foot, whereas the 'sense' of
Greek verse, unlike that of the French alexandrine, clearly avoids such
rhythmic symmetry (i.e. a hexameter divided into two units of three
feet). Indeed, this proscription against central diaeresis ought per-
haps to be seen as the most fundamental musical characteristic of the
dactylic hexameter. Despite the fact that it is a proscription based on
word division, and hence an immediate datum for oralists and other
traditional metrists, it is rarely mentioned in introductions to the
hexameter. Such theorists prefer to give statistical accounts of the
tendencies toward word division at various points of the line, and
often to assume, without futher evidence, that such tendencies reflect
'traditional' constraints. The notion of musical sense does not arise
in such a necessarily analytic approach. The new theory of the accent
at last allows us to enter fully into the world of musical description,
not only to speak confidently of proscriptions and prescriptions, but
to come to learn the concrete, positive musical desiderata in the
varieties of agreement and disagreement, which in all other poetries
are the dynamism that produce the merely verbal phenomena.
Hence, to illustrate the new range in our aesthetic judgement, we
can understand why Homer would *avoid* the accentually dactylic
reinforcement of the third foot; and further, among the varieties
of reinforcement that are *permitted* here, why he might *prefer* the
feminine barytone.

In sum, the total rhythmic and harmonic effect of the hexameter—its choral effect—has emerged in its elegance as a sequence of expected cadences in the third and sixth measures of the period, agreements of accent and ictus succeeding disagreement, punctuated by two turning points marked by word division, at the trochaic caesura and the bucolic diaeresis. It must of course be remembered that expectations are things that musicians and artists of all kinds take a delight in cheating; but they must first be created, and the opening lines of the *Iliad* exhibit a perceivable pattern.

If my reader is inclined toward the statistical in his analysis of poetry, he must bear in mind that my claim is for a *musical* reinforcement of ictus by prosody in Homer, not an *automatic* one. We are not dealing in this case with metre generated by language, but with language called into service to invigorate an independent rhythm. Hence we must expect a tendency to agreement at cadence points of the rhythm, but we must also *predict* 'violations' of this pattern that are in fact essential, as counterpoints and syncopations, in creating the sense of music. In effect, the musical prediction is for *variation*, while variation itself presumes a predominant pattern. The characteristic of musical composition is therefore licence rather than rule, although the one term is only comprehensible in terms of the other. Consider this line from *Iliad* 1:

οὐ γάρ πώ ποτ᾽ ἐμὰς βοῦς ἤλασαν οὐδὲ μὲν ἵππους,   (1.154)

Achilles here delivers a line to Agamemnon that divides in the middle (one cannot split the sense between ἐμὰς and βοῦς) and sounds oddly like a rhyming couplet. Not only is there the forbidden diaeresis after the third foot, but there is a barytonic stress on the *arsis* of that foot. A greater harmonic violation could not be conceived. But that there is an intended sing-song mockery in Achilles' arioso is supported by a later line in the delivery, which, although regular, also has a couplet-like feel, and continues his conceit that the Trojans have never done *him* wrong by pointing to the mountains and sea between them and his home:

οὔρεά τε σκιόεντα θάλασσά τε ἠχήεσσα   (1.157)

That we are dealing with musical rather than linguistic order in Homer, and hence with a case of licence rather than natural law,

adds an important nuance to any articulation of rules, or any claim of prediction.

One curiosity of the opening lines is the prevalent accentual reinforcement of the fifth foot (eight times out of ten there is 'emphatic agreement'). The resumptive assertion we expect in these lines is expressed primarily by the accent, and only secondarily by the bucolic diaeresis. (Often we see both, as in lines 2, 4, and 7.) One way or another, the thesis of the fifth foot is verbally marked, and appears to be a significant pulse point of the line. Diaeresis is not the whole story about this fifth thesis: its structural role in the musical flow is only now fully revealed, by an application of the new theory of the accent, to be on a par with the two prosodic cadences.

A notable feature of epic composition that does not appear to be explained directly by the present analysis is the prohibition of a trochaic caesura in the fourth foot (Hermann's Bridge). The ictus at this point is only reinforced by words with a dactylic accent and shape, filling the foot, or by words with a masculine cadence, producing a fourth foot masculine caesura; for some reason, there is very rarely reinforcement here by words with a feminine cadence. West sees the phenomenon as a more-or-less automatic consequence of the typical placings of words of certain shapes elsewhere in the line.[13] Such an account is circular, however; avoidance of trochaic caesura in the fourth foot may well have contributed to such typical placings in other parts of the line. Perhaps some experience with the physical sense of the dance could explain this curiosity. One rather obvious, mechanistic fact presents itself immediately: a regular occurrence of a fourth foot feminine cadence, combined with the regularity of the bucolic diaeresis, would together force the regular deployment of short monosyllables to complete the fourth foot. Perhaps this was an unwelcome constraint, on sound and sense. But perhaps there was an overarching rhythmic aesthetic, an aesthetic of the whole line as a musical unit, such as that which proscribes the rhythmic symmetry of diaeresis between the third and fourth feet, that also proscribes a mimicry of the typical cadence of the line end at this position.

Note that this choral analysis, for all that it lays hold of orchestic and linguistic realities, is nevertheless an abstraction from the total

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[13] M. L. West, *Greek Metre*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, 37–8.

musical effect. If one were to speak of the full aural impact of these famous lines, one would have to begin with their spondaic solemnity, the dirge-like quality of their movement, the mournful effect of the sound of a rhythmic series of long vowels. It is obvious that a prevailing prosodic pattern is in no sense a limitation on the expressive possibilities of Homer's music, any more than it was on his capacities as a storyteller. Consider the impact of a word such as ἡρώων: it is not merely a signifier of the moral worth of the men who have become food for jackals—and it *is* that—but in the texture of the choral composition, as the bard sings it out, the succession of long sounds makes of the word a lament, a groan for the sufferance of that indignity. (Consider the similar position and mournful effect of κηδείους, used by Briseis of her lost brothers, slain by Achilles, in her speech at *Il.* 19.294.) Standing at the beginning of a hexameter period, with a masculine cadence in the second foot—in a line where, notably, there is no prosodic cadence in the third foot—ἡρώων is brought into focus by the choral context so as to highlight both its semantic and its musical substance. Homer's language can turn into music, and back again; it is in the nature of his composition to dramatize this potency for its effects.

The prosodic tendencies here revealed are real: they give law to Homer's freedom. But they can wear masks of infinite variety. Consider the opening lines of the *Odyssey*, how vastly different their feel and tone. There is a preponderance of short vowels, and a tripping rhythm that is markedly dactylic and anapaestic. Yet the prosodic pattern, overlaying the rhythmic time relations, bears a clear resemblance to the pattern displayed in the sombre opening strains of the *Iliad*:

> Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
> πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν·
> πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,
> πολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
> ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων.   5
> ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσατο, ἱέμενός περ·
> αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
> νήπιοι, οἳ κατὰ βοῦς Ὑπερίονος Ἠελίοιο
> ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.
> τῶν ἁμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.   10

⏒◡◡　⏑́◡◡　⏒◡◡　⏑́◡◡　—◡̆◡　— ◡

⏒◡◡　——　⏒◡◡　—◡◡　⏒◡◡　⏒◡

— ⏒　——　⏒◡̆◡　⏑́◡◡　—◡̆◡　—⏒

—◡◡̆　——　⏒◡̆◡　⏑́◡◡　—◡◡　—◡̆

—◡̆◡　—⏑́　——　——　⏒◡◡　—⏒　　　5

——　—◡◡　⏒—　⏑́◡◡　—◡̆◡　⏒◡

—⏒　—◡◡　⏒◡◡　—◡◡　⏒◡◡　⏒◡

⏑́◡◡　—◡◡　⏒◡◡　⏑́◡◡　—◡◡　⏒◡

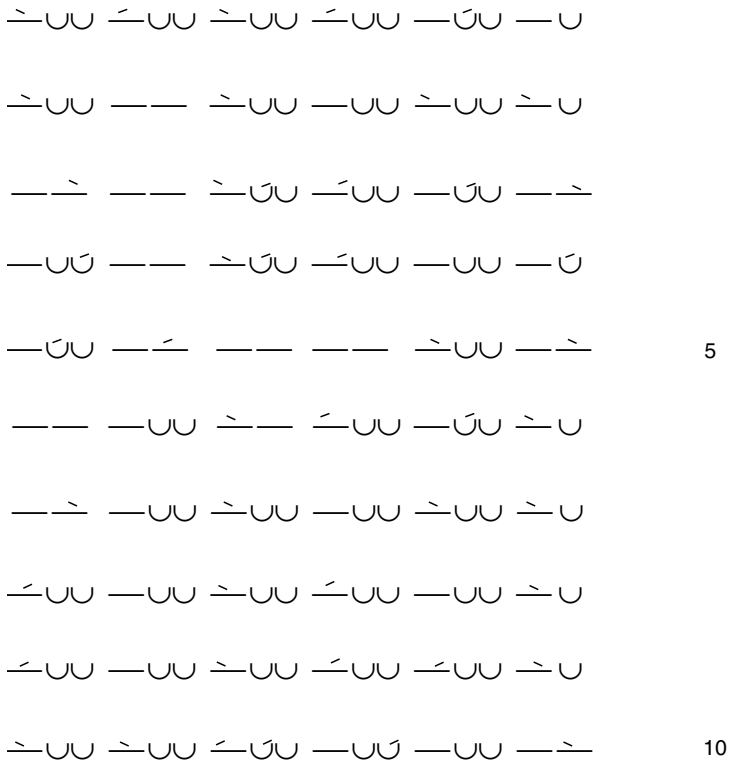⏑́◡◡　—◡◡　⏒◡◡　⏑́◡◡　⏑́◡◡　⏒◡

⏒◡◡　⏒◡◡　⏑́◡̆◡　—◡◡̆　—◡◡　—⏒　　　10

Figure 4.3　Prosodic Chart for *Od.* 1.1–10

(Amongst other matters of judgement: πτολίεθρον with its penult of doubtful quantity can be oxytone on the antepenult in prose, but is likely barytone on the penult here. We shall come to refer to this as a case of 'ictual determination of accent'. I have treated πλάγχθη, with a metrically shortened ultima, on analogy with my account of ἄνδρα, i.e. barytone on the penult; so also the trochaic termination of the enclitic combination, ἱέμενός περ.) We see, again, disagreement in the first and the fourth foot (in the latter case usually *with* reinforcement, but exclusively *oxytone*), and regular cadences in the third and sixth. Note especially the lack of accent in the second foot. Agreement in the first thesis requires the use of a word with accent on the first syllable, and

hence it could be argued that there is a certain automatic tendency in Greek toward disagreement at this location; but the only explanation for a pattern of disagreement or lack of accent in the second foot is conscious aesthetic choice. There seems to be less accentual reinforcement of the thesis in the fifth foot; but the reader will note that in these ten lines, where the fifth thesis is left unaccented, there is always a bucolic diaeresis. There seems to be a feeling for accent in the arsis in the third and in the fifth foot, on the first of the two shorts, sometimes in addition to accent in the thesis; this prosody appears to reinforce an anapaestic run in the rhythm. It certainly adds a vivid colour to the 'rhyming' phrases in lines three and four, ἴδεν ἄστεα ('he knew the towns') and πάθεν ἄλγεα ('he suffered griefs').

The fourth thesis, at the heart of the backward turn in the dance, seems to come in for dactylic emphasis in these lines. While a dactylic prosody, oxytone on the antepenult, is unable to reinforce the moments of musical 'arrival' in the line (that is, moments of agreement and cadence), it does appear suited to the more motile portions of the line, those portions that 'run with' the ictus. Consider especially the very first line of the poem, which has no masculine stresses, and which has accent (oxytone) in the fourth thesis, and syncopated accent (oxytone) in the fifth arsis, but no prosodic cadence at all where it is expected, in the final foot. The effect seems to call attention back to the already striking word πολύτροπον ('many-turned'), which reinforces that fourth thesis, and occupies no more nor less than the entire backward turn and return, the tropic points of the retrogression in the dance; the line, meanwhile, finds its cadence in the first foot of the next period, on πλάγχθη ('he wandered') in *enjambement*, from which the rest of the line recovers in a rousing dactylic run. Are not the choral factors here, the turn in the dance and a displaced cadence, a key to the fullness of Homer's verbal evocation of the harried wanderer, and a man of many turns? The dance turns with the very word, the cadence itself wanders. These are palpable, aural, and physical embodiments of the sense of the verse.

There may be evidence also in the bucolic poets, whose regularity of observance in hexameter poetry is the source of the epithet for the diaeresis, for such a physical embodiment of meaning. Their Hellenistic date would suggest that the dance of the Muses may have continued to be a template and source of inspiration for hexameter

poets of a certain genre. Consider this recurrent refrain from Theocritus' *Thyrsis*:

> ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι φίλαι ἄρχετ᾽ ἀοιδᾶς
> Begin the country song, Muses mine, begin the song.

Note how the chant 'begins again' at the diaeresis. Consider also this change in the refrain as Thyrsis' song proceeds:

> ἄρχετε βουκολικᾶς Μοῖσαι πάλιν ἄρχετ᾽ ἀοιδᾶς
> Begin the country song, Muses—again! Begin the song.

Not only do we have 'begin' at the diaeresis, but we have πάλιν, 'backwards, again', marking the retrogression.[14]

It is impossible to overstate the significance of this retrogression in the dance of the Muses as a kind of casting mould for later forms. (For the narratological impression of this form within Homer, see Chapter 6. Even if the ancient dance was not a συρτός, the description given on the shield comparing the motion of the round dance to that of a potter test-spinning his wheel would seem to imply that there were retrogressions.) I am thinking particularly of Plato: consider that the entire 'female argument' of the *Republic* is a retrogression; Socrates had been about to proceed at the beginning of Book 5 to a description of the bad regimes when he is interrupted and forced to say what he had meant about the community of women. This retrogression is no eddy or backwater; in the course of it we hear of the three waves of paradox—including that philosophers must be kings—the divided line and the images of the good and the cave. More locally, in the development of the curriculum for the guardians there is an apparently unmotivated skip from arithmetic and geometry to astronomy; we are forced to return to solid geometry before we can proceed to astronomy. Perhaps there is a reminder here that the retrogression in the round dance is at bottom astronomical, in origin a sympathetic imitation of the movement of the planet-gods who come to station, retrogress, and then move on eastward in the heavens. My favourite example from Plato, however, is the form of

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[14] Both this data and its possible significance were suggested to me by Katherine L. Kretler, junior fellow in Social Thought, University of Chicago, personal communication, 2003.

the *Symposium*. Recall that the participants are disposed in a circle, reclining amorously, and that in the succession of speeches it comes to be Aristophanes' turn, but he has the hiccoughs. So we proceed on to Eryximachus and then return to Aristophanes, whose speech occupies the retrogression. Those familiar with the speech could well appreciate that it is somehow pivotal, for all that the whole circle finally cadences with the speech of Diotima. This particular circle dance is disrupted, by the way, by a κῶμος, a linear processional dance, at whose head is the Dionysiac Alcibiades.

The openings of the two poems are not unrepresentative. Consider these eight lines of battle poetry (*Iliad* 6.29–36), which, in Arthur Adkins's words, 'constructed from common Homeric formulae, narrate a run-of-the-mill description of battle, little more than a tabulation of casualties':[15]

> Ἀστύαλον δ' ἄρ' ἔπεφνε μενεπτόλεμος Πολυποίτης·
> Πιδύτην δ' Ὀδυσεὺς Περκώσιον ἐξενάριξεν   30
> ἔγχει χαλκείῳ, Τεῦκρος δ' Ἀρεταονα δῖον
> Ἀντίλοχος δ' Ἄβληρον ἐνήρατο δουρὶ φαεινῷ
> Νεστορίδης, Ἔλατον δὲ ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων·
> ναῖε δὲ Σατνιόεντος ἐϋρρείταο παρ' ὄχθας
> Πήδασον αἰπεινήν. Φύλακον δ' ἕλε Λήιτος ἥρως   35
> φεύγοντ'·Εὐρύπυλος δὲ Μελάνθιον ἐξενάριξεν.

Adkins goes on to point out that 'great skill in variation of phrase length is used to avoid monotony … [With one exception], all the clauses in these eight lines are of different metrical length.' From the rhythmic and prosodic analysis (Fig. 4.4) we see a greater freedom in the third foot, but the regular pattern of accentual cadences is still discernible, and becomes more so as one extends the sample before or beyond these eight lines. While it is evident that the rhythmic form and prosodic tendencies exhibited in the hexameter have given shape and length to Homer's recurrent phrases—the 'common Homeric formulae'—it is also clear that he was not constrained by them to compose in rhythmic blocks, so that phrase groups always matched up with the same cadence points and periods in the verse. (Recall his use of ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν, bridging the two sub-periods, in *Iliad* 1.7; G. S.

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[15] A.W. H. Adkins, *Poetic Craft in the Early Greek Elegists*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985, 22.

—∪́∪ —∪́∪ —̑∪∪ —∪́∪ —∪∪ —̑

—— —̑∪∪ —— —́∪∪ —∪∪ —̑∪   30

—́∪∪ —— —̑—̑ —∪∪ —́∪∪ —̑∪

—∪́∪ —— —̑∪∪ —́∪∪ —∪∪ ——̑

—∪∪ —̑∪́∪ —∪∪ —̑— —̑∪∪ ——̑

—̑∪∪ —∪∪ —̑∪∪ —— —̑∪∪ ——̑

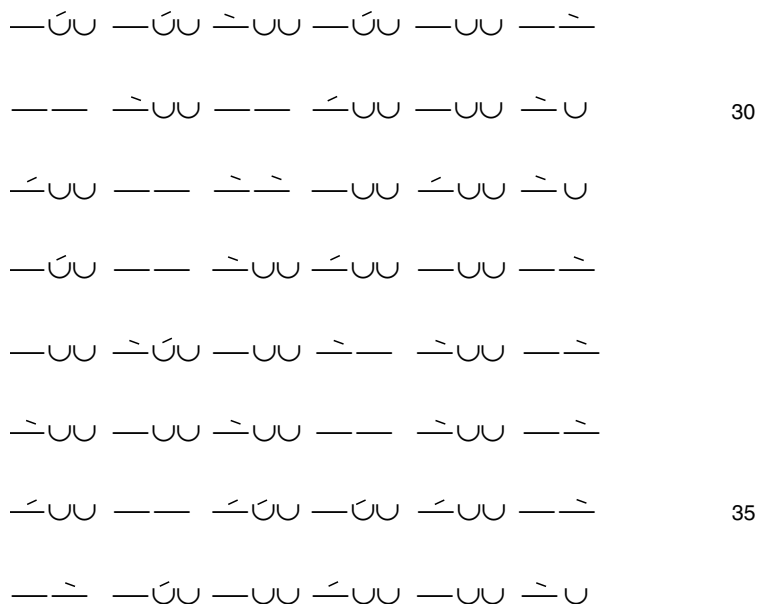—́∪∪ —— —́∪́∪ —∪́∪ —́∪∪ ——̑   35

——̑ —∪́∪ —∪∪ —́∪∪ —∪∪ —̑∪

Figure 4.4 Prosodic Chart for *Il.* 6.29–36

Kirk refers to the type of metrical structure exhibited in that line as a 'rising three-folder'.[16]) The rhythmic regularity of the catalogue form becomes for Homer a varietal option, a way to tap into the intrinsic rhythmic appeal of the round dance; it is never a constraint. Even within periods of rhythmic regularity, there is always a choice of cadence in the final foot. The types of prosodic reinforcement also represent an integral variable. An accented long syllable can be oxytone, or barytone; if barytone, it may be post-acute, circumflected, or closed acute. When one considers the full presence of a Greek word, its harmonic contonation inextricably fused with a particular sequence of phones, one is in a position to appreciate the true complexity and sonoric diversity of the elements of Greek poetical composition. The dance itself, by itself, is an engrossing physical and musical phenomenon; it has its own pressure points,

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[16] G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, 6 vols., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, i. 20.

its turns, releases, and cadences. When we come to the verse, even the most metrically rigid and conformist of verbal accompaniments has an integral prosodic variability, in addition to this orchestic vitality. But when we arrive at the compositional realization of a Homer, we come to a level that is almost beyond criticism, to the level of, say, Shakespeare, or the greatest of the modern classical composers. An unearthly richness in the texture here yields to a transcendent clarity of expression.

Adkins finds the life in these buried lines of battle poetry purely from a metrical analysis. The harmony provides the consummation. He is right to note the effect of the *enjambement* of φεύγοντ' ('fleeing') in line 36:

a heavy spondaic disyllable followed by a heavy stop at H3 [i.e. the third step of the seventeen] derives great emphasis from position, pause, and the comparative rarity of the phenomenon, and φεύγοντ' fully merits its prominence, for it describes the greatest shame that a Homeric warrior can suffer: death while in flight from the enemy.[17]

We should only add: here is a word with a long syllable barytonically accented in the arsis of the first foot, in disagreement with the ictus, in a line which has caesura but no accentual cadence in the third foot, and so no movement from this disagreement toward a resolution in agreement. The prominence of the word is a physical and aural fact, recoverable immediately from a performance of the musical text, and mediately through a metrical and prosodic analysis.
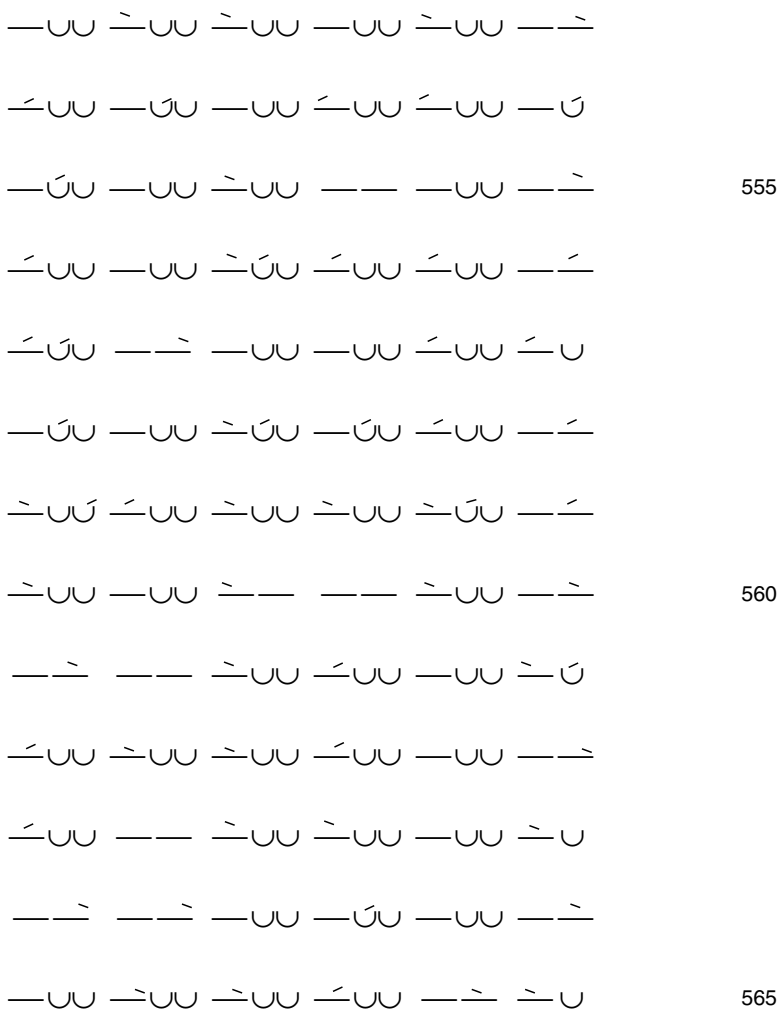
Now consider some lines of Homer's that are in no sense 'run-of-the-mill'. They describe the Trojan bivouac on the plain, a thousand fires burning before Ilium (*Il.* 8.553–65):

> οἱ δὲ μέγα φρονέοντες ἐπὶ πτολέμοιο γεφύρας
> ἥατο παννύχιοι, πυρὰ δέ σφισι καίετο πολλά.
> ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐν οὐρανῷ ἄστρα φαεινὴν ἀμφὶ σελήνην   555
> φαίνετ' ἀριπρεπέα, ὅτε τ' ἔπλετο νήνεμος αἰθήρ·
> ἔκ τ' ἔφανεν πᾶσαι σκοπιαὶ καὶ πρώονες ἄκροι
> καὶ νάπαι· οὐρανόθεν δ' ἄρ' ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ,
> πάντα δέ τ' εἴδεται ἄστρα, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα ποιμήν·
> τόσσα μεσηγὺ νεῶν ἠδὲ Ξάνθοιο ῥοάων   560
> Τρώων καιόντων πυρὰ φαίνετο Ἰλιόθι πρό.
> χίλι' ἄρ' ἐν πεδίῳ πυρὰ καίετο, πὰρ δὲ ἑκάστῳ

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17 Adkins, *Poetic Craft in the Early Greek Elegists*, 23.

ἤατο πεντήκοντα σέλᾳ πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο.
ἵπποι δὲ κρῖ λευκὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι καὶ ὀλύρας
ἑσταότες παρ᾽ ὄχεσφιν ἐΰθρονον Ἠῶ μίμνον.   565

—◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ —⏑̄

⏑́◡◡ —◡̆◡ —◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ —◡̆

—◡́◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ —— —◡◡ —⏑̄   555

⏑́◡◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄◡́◡ ⏑́◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ —⏑́

⏑́◡̆◡ —⏑̄ —◡◡ —◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ ⏑́—◡

—◡́◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄◡́◡ —◡́◡ ⏑́◡◡ —⏑́

⏑̄◡◡̆ ⏑́◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑̄◡̆◡ —⏑́

⏑̄◡◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄— —— ⏑̄◡◡ —⏑̄   560

—⏑̄ —— ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄—◡̆

⏑́◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ —◡◡ —⏑̄

⏑́◡◡ —— ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ —◡◡ ⏑̄—◡

—⏑̄ —⏑̄ —◡◡ —◡́◡ —◡◡ —⏑̄

—◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑̄◡◡ ⏑́◡◡ —⏑̄ ⏑̄—◡   565

Figure 4.5 Prosodic Chart for *Il.* 8.553–65

(I have treated οὐρανῷ as though its final accent must have been suppressed. I have treated trochaic shapes with a closed first syllable, such as ἄστρα, πάντα, τόσσα, according to my account of ἄνδρα, i.e. as barytone on the penult.) Note the disagreement in the first two feet, with either lack of accent or oxytonic reinforcement, which prepares for the regular barytonic cadences in the third. The fourth foot also shows disagreement or de-emphasis, in all of the defined forms. The fifth thesis when unmarked by accent is usually marked by diæresis; and there is a variety in the determination of the final foot.

These lines are justly famous for their imagery, which survives well in translation, and it is the images evoked that are the lasting achievement of the Greek. But these images are rooted in a peculiarly Greek, or Homeric kind of euphony; to discover this beauty is to discover aural fire, stars, and aether. The accentual pattern seems regular in the abstract, but up close—and the closer one looks, the more one sees—there is a constant variety. The first line, for example, is reinforced accentually *with barytones exclusively.* The second, how-ever, is striking in its *exclusive use of oxytones*, right through to an oxytone stress on a final short (πολλά). (The trochaic option in the final foot usually involves stressing the long; but see also 561.) The weight of the first line rests on the magnitude of the men's thoughts and on the solidity of the γεφύρας, the dykes against the flood of war. The quick oxtyone rhythms of the second line, by contrast, seem to serve up tongues of flame (πυρὰ δέ σφισι καίετο πολλά). There appear to be prosodic motives which determine the shape and inform the meaning of whole lines, and the juxtaposition of lines. This is to discover an overarching melodic aesthetic, whose elements are *not* formulaic building blocks conceived and defined in terms of the metre alone. Vivante makes a similar point solely on the basis of rhythm:

Take, in *Il.* 3.423, Helen joining Paris in his chamber: ἡ δ᾽ εἰς ὑψόροφον θάλαμον κίε δῖα γυναικῶν [and she, to the high-roofed chamber, she went, the divine among women]. We have a simple act of going, but notice how it is expressed. From the initial 'she' to the final noun, Helen's presence spreads through the verse, quickened by the nimble verb near the center. The effect is one of lightness and solemnity at once. The epithets give fullness to the moment by simply touching off what is there. We linger upon steadfast shapes even while the passing act removes them from our view. Transience

finds solidity, and solidity is in turn dissolved. We have rest in movement and movement in rest—at once, tranquility and motion. A translation such as 'Helen, divine among women, went to the high-roofed chamber' would only give us embellished description. The force of Homer's verse lies in its rhythm—in the way the words take position, in the way each pause hints suspense, and in the way the parts integrate to realize a growing presence. It would be inadequate merely to point out a combination and adaptation of metrical formulas: the verse has an intrinsic unity, and it came on one wave of rhythm.[18]

Consider the effect of the trilled rho's in the phrase οὐρανόθεν δ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ὑπερράγη (*Il.* 8.558), and in particular the 'squeezing' of ὑπερράγη into the rhythm, with metrical shortening of the final vowel (and probably a shift from barytone on the ultima to oxytone on the penult). The effect in the mouth is a vocal mime of the breaking and the parting, through which the upper air breathes forth in the long open vowels of αἰθήρ. The next line (559) consummates an already fertile simile with the unexpected perspective of the star-gazing shepherd, whose lonely night-time tendance and bucolic joy are in contrast with the crowded warrior companies around the points of fire; but whose solitariness speaks, perhaps, to the inward reflections of a soldier next his mates, on the night before a battle. The line is unremarkable in accent—there is a slight stress on the mind (or 'breath's vessel', φρένα) of the shepherd—but its articulation has a peculiarly Greek sonority, framed by labials, centred on the velars in γέγηθε, and connected in between by two runs of dentals in various voice and aspiration. For such chiastic phonic symmetry, compare 'Et rose elle a vécu ce que vivent les roses';[19] clearly, there is at times in Homer a lyric poet's sensibility for the *Gestalt* of a musical line.

There are several other moments of harmonic interest, as for example the double accent in the final foot of line 561, but the most striking effect is reserved for the final line (565). Here we find a rare barytone in the arsis of the fifth foot. The phrase ἐΰθρονον ᾿Ηῶ, over the fourth and fifth feet, the fair-throned Dawn whom the

[18] Paolo Vivante, *Homeric Rhythm: A Philosophical Study*, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1997, 4.

[19] François de Malherbe, *Consolation à Monsieur du Perier, Gentilhomme d'Aix en Provence, sur la Mort de sa Fille.*

horses await, reads as though it ought to end the line, as though it was designed for the fifth and sixth feet after the bucolic diaeresis. The false cadence here is a masterful resolution to the whole passage: one has to regather one's breath after the masculine stress in ᾽*Hῶ*, to voice the final word, *μίμνον* ('they were waiting'), with its immediately adjacent accent. It is not the dawn with its epithet that is brought to the fore, as one might expect, but the awaiting it which is nudged forward as the key to all the imagery. In the words of Bernard Knox:

These are surely the clearest hills, the most brilliant stars and the brightest fires in all poetry, and everyone who has waited to go into battle knows how true the lines are, how clear and memorable and lovely is every detail of the landscape the soldier fears he may be seeing for the last time.[20]

As one begins to take in the whole of the composition of this passage in its phonic, rhythmic, and harmonic texture, together with its lyric power and the meaning of its imagery, it becomes over-whelmingly clear that we are dealing with a text that must be *prepared* in order to be performed. There is a sheer phonic prowess, in lung capacity and the articulations of the vocal apparatus, as well as rehearsal required for the performance of such a passage, in dividing the breaths and punctuating the phrases, to register and to render all the effects that it contains. The situation is similar to that of a Mozart text in relation to a modern singer or instrumentalist. What is more, a Homeric storyteller must not only prepare the content of his lines, but also the way in he which he shall render them: in this case he is a lyric poet in his own voice, but at other times he must be Zeus, or Achilles, or Helen, or Penelope. He must therefore be an extraordinary singer and a multidimensional actor. Our only evidence from the ancient world suggests that the rhaps-odes were just such skilled performers in relation to their Mozart. They were exceptionally good at selecting and performing from a text. The notion of composition *in* performance—'[a]n oral poem is not composed *for* but *in* performance'[21]—a notion of an extempor-aneous combination of stock metrical elements, with an improvised style and delivery—seems fantastic and counter-intuitive if it is to be

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[20] Knox, 'Introduction', 30.
[21] Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960, 4.

applied to Homer's extraordinary music and the fully realized his-
trionics of his script.

Parry's theory of oral narrative extemporizing requires the twin
notions of 'economy' and 'extension' in the dictional repertoire:
'Only the fixed formulae of systematic diction appear to simplify
the process of versification in such a way that composition with
formulae would be significantly different from composition without
them.'[22] David M. Shive appears to have gutted Parry's theory on its
own terms by exposing, among other things, a rather obvious select-
ivity in Parry's choice of data. Parry himself and his successors came
to 'soften' their notions of 'formula' and 'economy', yielding to the
rather pressing nature of the Homeric facts, but seem also to have
quite missed the point that there can be no aid to extemporizing
without *actual* economy and extension in the metrical diction. Shive
concludes that if his own reconsideration of the data 'has hit upon
the truth, then Parry's research into systems of noun-epithet formu-
lae is unscientific and untrustworthy, and the only clear model of
facile versification is undone'.[23]

Perhaps we could imagine a space in Homer's score for, say, an
improvised cadenza. Perhaps the whole of *Odyssey* 24 is such a
composition, by a single bard. The notion of an improvised cadenza
is *not* impossible in relation to a musical text such as Homer's, so
long as one is clear about the nature of a cadenza. Such a thing can
only be improvised before a knowing audience, by an extremely
skilled performer, who knows acutely the constraints that his author's
text places on such improvisation; and above all who knows the text
to which he is adding as a *musical whole*, to which he is finding a
resolution. All insertions or additions to a musical text, or an editor's
cuts for that matter, must take account of the music of the whole.
This is true even without the constraints of key and theme that would
be present in a text of tonal harmony. It is as though we are adding
(or cutting) a scene in *Hamlet*.

At the very least, it can no longer be doubted that it is prosodic
patterns that determine the composition of epic lines, not merely
metrical elements, formulaic or otherwise. The prosodic charts we

[22] Shive, *Naming Achilles*, 138.
[23] Ibid.

have drawn in this chapter demonstrate a definite pattern of reinforcement, while the actual lines themselves show an almost infinite variety of melody in achieving these regular cadences. We therefore conclude that it is *aesthetic desiderata that determine the form of the hexameter in caesura and diaeresis*; and we now have reason to find inadequate, as well as upside-down and backwards, the notion that the *form of the hexameter determines the shapes of metrical formulas*. Hence adherents of Homeric composition-in-performance must take our conclusion and go back to the drawing board. But as students of Homer begin more and more to recite his verses according to the new prosody, the most absolute arbiter of all—common sense—will come to weigh decisively against the notion of Homeric composition-in-performance, in the face of Homeric music in real time, in its arresting and sumptuous variety from line to line.

At climactic moments, the poet will challenge his verse to produce new effects. This exchange occurs between Odysseus and Penelope, just before she gives him the test of the bed (*Od.* 23.166–76):

> ‘Δαιμονίη, περὶ σοί γε γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων
> κῆρ ἀτέραμνον ἔθηκαν Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχοντες·
> οὐ μέν κ’ ἄλλη γ’ ὧδε γυνὴ τετληότι θυμῷ
> ἀνδρὸς ἀφεσταίη, ὅς οἱ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας
> ἔλθοι ἐεικοστῷ ἔτεϊ ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.   170
> ἀλλ’ ἄγε μοι, μαῖα, στόρεσον λέχος, ὄφρα καί αὐτὸς
> λέξομαι· ἦ γὰρ τῇ γε σιδήρεον ἐν φρεσὶν ἦτορ.’
> Τὸν δ’ αὖτε προσέειπε περίφρων Πηνελόπεια·
> ‘Δαιμόνι’, οὔτ’ ἄρ τι μεγαλίζομαι οὔτ’ ἀθερίζω
> οὔτε λίην ἄγαμαι, μάλα δ’ εὖ οἶδ’ οἷος ἔησθα   175
> ἐξ Ἰθάκης ἐπὶ νηὸς ἰὼν δολιχηρέτμοιο . . .’

Once again we see from the prosodic analysis in Figure 4.6 the broad, familiar patterns of disagreement and agreement emerging as before, with a delectable variation from line to line. Just in terms of the prosody, without regard to phrase structure, we see one period here with only two accents; two of them have six accents; one of them has eight. Of particular note is line 171, which is without a cadence in either the third or the sixth foot. Odysseus’ agitation at his wife’s reticence is clearly marked and pressing; the line spills over, to find something of a resolution in *enjambement*, upon the oxytonic λέξομαι (‘I’m going to bed’). The notion of Odysseus going to

The Form of the Hexameter

—∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   —⏑̄   —∪∪   —⏑̄

⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪

—⏑̄   —⏑̄   ⏑̄∪∪   ——   —∪́∪   —⏑̄

—∪∪   ——   ⏑̄—   ⏑̄∪∪   —∪∪   —⏑̄

⏑̄∪∪   ——   ⏑̄∪́∪   ——   —∪́∪   ⏑̄∪   170

—∪́∪   —⏑̄   —∪́∪   —∪́∪   ⏑̄∪∪   —∪

⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄—   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   —∪∪   ⏑̄∪

—⏑̄   —∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   —⏑̄   —∪∪   ⏑̄∪

—∪́∪   ⏑̄—   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   —⏑̄

⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪́∪   —∪́∪   ⏑̄⏑̄   ⏑̄∪∪   ⏑̄∪   175

—∪∪   ⏑̄∪∪   —∪∪   —∪∪   ——   ⏑̄∪

Figure 4.6 Prosodic Chart for *Od.* 23.166–76

sleep, and where he is going to sleep, has been jogged forth from the
auditor's subconscious by the pointed rhythmic displacement of the
word; in a sense, the bed has already moved; he does not know why,
perhaps he is not aware of it at all, but the listener has been prepared
for the comic sublimity of the bed trick by a consummate poet and
story teller.

Even more striking is line 175, in Penelope's response. There is in
this period a rare and remarkable sequence, against all notions of epic

rhythm and harmony, of three successive circumflected syllables: εὖ οἶδ' οἷος ἔησθα.[24] If there is an *absolute* in metrical theory, it is that rhythm depends on alternation—on the alternation of emphases in time. Hence there is also something absolute about the harmonic innovation registered here; three consecutive complete Hellenic contonations should be unsingable within a dactylic line. Even someone who hears formulae in Homer must admit that there is something more than an instance of non-formulaic language going on here: there is something antithetical to the very *notion* of a metrical formula. Indeed, it is by 'innovation' that the concept 'tradition' is analytically determined, and hence by which it comes properly to light—*not* by the 'formula'. At a moment of ultimate tension, the histrionic minstrel has dared his music to overreach its native forms, to find and to embody an expression inside the rhythm and harmony of the epic line which captures the sure mind, the knowing heart, the very living breath of Penelope. 'I know you, what you were,' she seems to say to the stranger before her, with all the force, and risk, of her own identity. This is a moment to be savoured, a moment of musical disclosure and self-revelation—μῦθος rooted in, and yet emergent from, the very metrical–harmonic substance of the ἔπος—a moment scarcely to be matched in the apparitions of later literature.

[24] A search for other instances of this phenomenon in Homer would likely have to be done by recitation, rather than computer, as the sequence to look for is three consecutive barytonic syllables, which need not all be circumflected. There appears to be another instance in a speech of Penelope's (!), in her prayer to Artemis (*Od.* 20.61–90): ἐς Δία τερπικέραυνον, ὁ γάρ τ' εὖ οἶδεν ἅπαντα (75). (The enclitic collocation γάρ τε has an acute on a closed penult.) Nestor, lamenting the Achaean blood spilt by Ares, gives us τῶν νῦν αἷμα κελαινὸν ἐΰρροον ἀμφὶ Σκάμανδρον (*Il.* 7.329). When Athena disarms Ares, who is keen to avenge his son (*Il.* 15.121–41), she says τῶ σ' αὖ νῦν κέλομαι μεθέμεν χόλον υἷος ἑῆος (138). The τῶ is also printed τώ, however. If we read τῶ, there are also *two* such sequences in one short speech of Ares, at the beginnings of the opening and closing lines of his vaunt to Athena (*Il.* 21.394–9): τίπτ' αὖτ', ὦ κυνάμυια, θεοὺς ἔριδι ξυνελαύνεις and τῶ σ' αὖ νῦν ὀΐω ἀποτισέμεν ὅσσα ἔοργας. This is the other scene in Homer where Ares and Aphrodite end up prostrate in each other's arms. If in Penelope's melody to Odysseus there is an evocation of Ares, and the coupling of Ares and Aphrodite, such cross-dressing and layering of theme would surely not be beyond Homer. But only in Penelope's usage does the sequence occur in mid-line. All these instances occur in speeches: the powerful rhythmic and harmonic effect appears most suited not to narrative but to the emotive representation of a speaker.

5

The 'Choral Signifier': The Shaping of Homeric Speech

Two aspects of Homer's presentation of Demodocus and the Phaeacian dancers require special emphasis before we can complete our discussion of the form of the hexameter.

A. THE SUMMONING POWER OF CIRCLE DANCE

The first is Demodocus' position at the centre of the dance. The centre of a ring dance is a potent, magical place; it is a place of conjuration. Ritual circle dances, as they are depicted on Minoan and Mycenaean artifacts, were occasions for the god's epiphany, descending into the very midst of the dancers.[1] The possessed motion, the hypnotic rhythm, the mask-like faces serve to turn the circle into a kind of lens at whose focus sits the bard. Under such conditions, an invocation of the Muse is no literary conceit; it is an invitation to the palpable, living presence of the goddess. In Walter Burkert's words, 'the experience of the dance merges with the experience of the deity'.[2]

Danced verse intends to conjure a presence. This is the peculiar aim and native power of the art form χορεία, as the poet's vehicle for bringing to life in the present the stories of his community's past. The dancing ground is a 'movable locus with the magnetic power to

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[1] Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985; see e.g. 40.
[2] Ibid. 103.

attract a divinity or lover, to experience union, to dismember, to reconstitute, in short a *theatron* for revealing and manipulating the natural and supernatural worlds'.[3] The dramatic actor, and his evocation through impersonation, represents the choral poet's ultimate innovation in the art of conjuring a presence. In the same stroke, however, this innovation transformed the original power of the chorus of dancers—it turned them at some level into actors as well—and so involved a move from what may be called a poetics of evocation towards a poetics of imitation. This development may have depended in part on an increasing virtuosity in both the verbal and the orchestic aspects of choral lyric, so that the experience of performance was already less participatory for an audience, and more theatrical. Earlier poets in epic and lyric, on the other hand, had occasion to exploit the more intrinsic aspects of dance ritual to achieve their epiphanies.

It has long been recognized that the combinations of noun and epithet in epic verse are metrical 'building blocks' of the hexameter line. A prevalent interpretation of this fact led to a theory of these phrases as oral 'formulas', by means of which a bardic tradition improvised its strings of hexameters. What *is* a metrical building block, however? It is a unit of dance. What does it mean to 'dance out' the name of an object, flush with its native epithets? It is to conjure, or at least to evoke, the presence of the referent, whether human or otherwise, in the locus of the ring, through the choral expression of movement and song. Homer has many techniques for impressing the minds of his audience with the presence of something, but the noun-and-epithet phrases are a unique resource of the dactylic hexameter for a poet who was still close to its dance origins: these phrases are the true names of things, their summoning names, their names in dance.

Catalogue poetry is surely, from a literary point of view, the most boring portion of the Greeks' poetic legacy. But consider what the effect of this poetry must have been like in performance. What begins as a self-subsistent, retrogressive, and rhythmic movement in the

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[3] Steven H. Lonsdale, 'A Dancing Floor for Ariadne (*Iliad* 18.590–592): Aspects of Ritual Movement in Homer and Minoan Religion', in Jane B. Carter and Sarah P. Morris (eds.), *The Ages of Homer*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995, 281.

round, takes on a semantic force, as the song strikes up, and the rhythm and harmony of the ancestral names interweave with and, as it were, re-harmonize the rhythm and direction of the steps. And conversely, just as the dance becomes meaningful, so also does the word in dance take on the power of circle magic, so that it not only points, but *summons*. As one danced to the florid chant of names in their rhythmic ideality, one felt the very presence of one's ancestors gracing the communal circle: the storied warriors and their well-balanced ships on the expedition to Troy, or the noble women of the past in the matriarchal line. (The performing of a catalogue was not therefore a history lesson, nor would it have been a dried up obligatory tradition or a mere exercise in memory: perhaps it was in fact something like a public *séance*.) The effect of the noun–epithet phrases was felt on all three of the levels of χορεία. In its semantic aspect, its lexical sense, the noun and epithet are together significant of an independent reality; but in its aspect as rhythm, its orchestic sense, the phrase is made evocative of that reality by being danced out in performance, and in its prosodic aspect, its vocal and harmonic sense—married also to that rhythm—it becomes memorable in itself.

We should distinguish between the mnemonic and the memorable. There is no intrinsic or necessary connection between catalogues and dance. The function and functionality of a catalogue or list is mnemonic; formulaic language need not play any role in this function; rather, the archetype of a catalogue is the series of *counting numbers*, a list of proper names in a fixed and unchangeable order. That is, one remembers that one element follows another in a catalogue or list (whether shopping or genealogical) in the way that one remembers that six follows five; and the way that one remembers the latter is lost in the very first functioning of the active memory. (A. Seidenberg connects the origin of counting itself to a once widespread creation ritual.[4]) Dance adds to the speaking of a catalogue, which is a list of substantives, the phenomenological summoning of each substantive; and in addition, it provides a rhythmic template that delimits the expansion in proper names and epithets of a danced-out signifier. What natural limit could there be, after all, to

⁴ A. Seidenberg, 'The Ritual Origin of Counting', *Archive for History of the Exact Sciences*, 2 (1962/3), 1–40.

the proper names and titles of a god whose living presence one wished to entice? The internal articulations of the hexameter that we have derived from dance provide the delimiting template for expanded naming. Hence the combination of catalogue and round dance provide a complete account of the genesis and the ontology of metrical name-and-epithet phrases in Greek epic. The idea here is quite simple: that to name something in a circle dance, so as to tap into the dance's summoning power, one must name it in the rhythm of the dance, and according to its breaks or changes in direction. The power of dance turns memory into epiphany. Let us suppose that those epic narratives that grew directly out of catalogues would choose to exploit the epiphanic effects of such phrases in their storytelling, intensifying a performer's evocative ability simply to refer to things, rather than abandon them when the dancing space stopped being the locus of performance, and the catalogue turned into a story.

It is only in their semantic aspect that these phrases have recently been discussed. The question has been, do the epithets mean anything? Is φυσίζοος αἶα merely a metrical formula for the earth, or is the earth really 'life-giving' (or perhaps 'grain-bearing', 'fertile') when, unbeknownst to Helen, it hides her brothers from the sight of the living (*Iliad* 3.243)? John Ruskin's romantic view of this passage has come in for some hard ribbing, from the likes of Matthew Arnold and Parry.[5] What I should like to inject into this very real debate is some sense of the order of the problem. Φυσίζοος αἶα is both a physical rhythm and an aural melody, as well as a phrase composed of epithet and noun. A parallel to the question, 'does the epithet in Homer's phrase mean anything?'—parallel because the same elements of rhythm, harmony, and semantics are required for an analysis of the artifact—is the question, 'does the libretto of a Mozart opera mean anything?' This is a snub-nosed sort of a question, the more it offends with its lack of taste, the more it dogs the mind for an answer. Of course the words are essential to the full meaning and expression of an aria. On the other hand, of course they

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[5] Quotations from all three can be found together in Vivante's *The Epithets in Homer*, 137–8.

are not. An exploration of the nature of musical semantics, or melodic signification, would appear to serve both students of Homer and students of Mozart. If there is a sense here in which one can speak of the traditional, in relation to either Homer or Mozart, on the evidence of their texts, it is in the sense of a musical tradition. Modern insights into ethnomusicology, on the question of the transmission of such traditions, for example, or on the very practical question of the effects of dance on prosody, may well serve to illuminate the musical texts of both these authors, not to say the whole library of modern classical music, and the texts of ancient χορεία across the whole span of its history in epic, lyric, and drama.

A choral analysis cannot be reduced to an analysis in terms of one of its three elements. However appropriate and plangent the meaning of a word, if it disjoints the rhythm, or if it is diseuphonious in context, it cannot make for good poetry. Conversely, however felicitous the sound and the rhythm, if a word should somehow mar the sense, it makes for falsity in the verse. In *all* poetry one looks for a perfect consummation of word and rhythm. What is peculiar to ancient epic is the prominence of the musical component of language in its composition.

The source of this musical emphasis in the speech of epic versifying is *recurrence*, and the source of this verbal recurrence is in dance. The recurrence of lines and phrases is a spontaneity in the accompaniment of a round dance that is continuously repeating in its very structure. One does not need to explain the recurrence of words and melodies in the accompaniment of a round (such as a Christmas carol): *one would rather have to explain the lack of it.* Such recurrence of phrases tends to emphasize their accentual patterns so that they begin to register upon the ear as melodies. They become signature lines that evoke their objects and referents with all the directness and immediacy of music. Πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης is forever the crash and seethe of the sea—in Derek Walcott's invocation, 'the white surf as it crashes | and spreads its sibilant collar on a lace shore'. When one considers the historical grounding of these signature lines as unitary rhythmical components of a circling dance, one is in a position to take the full measure of their extraordinary evocative power, the power to evoke a presence, quite beyond the mediacy of lexical signification.

Such power survives, in the transition from bardic round dance to solo rhapsodic recitation, because the rhythmic pulse of its declamation still governs a noun-and-epithet phrase, and so propels and infuses its capacity to name. Indeed, the frequent use of staffs and staff-like objects as 'props' in Homer's narrative—Chryseus' sceptre first in the *Iliad*, and Athena-Mentes' Armageddon spear first in the *Odyssey*—may well indicate that Homer was composing for the exigencies of rhapsodic rather than bardic–lyric–orchestic performance.[6] But the histrionic dimension of his text and its performance continues to be rooted consciously in the recurrent cycle of dancing feet, such that Aristotle in his time can number and divide the *steps* of an epic line with syllables. Consider ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη, ῥοδοδάκτυλος ’Ηώς, the *Odyssey*'s characteristic evocation of daybreak, 'when she, the early-born one appeared, rose-fingers, the dawn'. This verse and other Homeric recurrences have been well described as 'brief incantations'.[7] The epithets become names, transporting a single feminine subject—hidden in the Greek until she is revealed in the proper name of Dawn—*through* the line. The simple declamation of this line is a dancing out of its subject that culminates in an evocation and an embodiment. In their rhythmic progression, coming to rest in the balanced modulation from descending to ascending in ῥοδοδάκτυλος ’Ηώς, we feel forever the spread and fall of morning rays, and their consummation in the emergent reality of risen dawn.

It is small wonder that as the dactylic hexameter became a medium for narrative, Homer should continue to draw on the power of noun-and-epithet phrases and their recurrence to arrest a presence, although he may not have intended his works to be danced or even sung; and that the conjuring enumeration of the catalogue form should continue to impress him in its own right. For all that the very meaninglessness of repetition dulls the semantic power of a phrase, it must be stressed that rhythmic repetition is the *only way* to draw out a phrase's musical quality; the prize is a *choral signifier*, a word fully realized in its evocative, musical potency. Here is the solid

[6] Kretler, personal communication 2002.
[7] Robert Fitzgerald, 'Postscript', in *Homer*, The Odyssey, tr. Robert Fitzgerald, New York: Vintage Classics, 1990, 492.

empirical reason for repetition in the literary text of Homer. Here also is why the recurrence of phrases in Homer's epics, or Mozart's arias, in ancient times or ours, has never been *heard* as repetition.

Such 'choral signifiers' are still words, however, and they must at some level retain their semantic force. The lexical element is the original signifier, the foundation of any poetic or musical expansion. The question, of course, is to what extent the meaning is still felt in a recurrent phrase that has begun to cast a musical spell. (Recent theorists have approached this issue in terms of a typically anaesthetic distinction between 'ornamental' and 'functional' epithets.) A choral analysis can of itself offer some guidelines. If one epithet is substituted for another, for example, the musical effects of recurrence should be destroyed; the spell would be broken, so to speak, and light should be cast onto the semantic intention of the replacement, and perhaps back onto the original epithet as well. Richard Sacks cites a case where πολύφρονος (*Odyssey* 8.297) is apparently substituted for περικλυτοῦ (8.287) as an epithet of Hephaestus, within a space of ten lines in Demodocus' choral song about Ares and Aphrodite.[8] The metrical shape of the two words is the same in context—they occur at the same place in the line—and so we have a case here of a violation of what the Parry school calls 'economy'. (We note, however, that there is a difference in prosody and hence actual rhythm.)[9] Homer repeats the new epithet in thirty lines: variety does not seem to be his motive for the 'substitution'. Sacks sees here a teasing identification of the cuckolded Hephaestus and the hero Odysseus, who also attracts, exclusively with Hephaestus, the epithet πολύφρων in the *Odyssey.* At the very least, attention has been called to the epithet as a name, which serves to link the god and the hero; quite possibly Homer is also trading on the meaning of the word, to draw out the comical irony of the husband's position. Hephaestus' intelligence and quick-wittedness in capturing Ares and Aphrodite in the act only serves to point up his impotence. (I would myself always see

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[8] Richard Sacks, *The Traditional Phrase in Homer*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987, 13–14.

[9] To what extent might prosodic differences, in otherwise metrically identical phrases, help save Parry's theory of economy? Is it not strange that the notion of the 'oral' formula was defined under the abstraction of metricality, rather than the prosodic actuality of sung speech?

Odysseus' πολύφρων in light of Penelope's περίφρων, which is often presumptively translated 'circumspect'; while his 'many' may be ever so many, it is still not as much as her 'more'. Penelope 'passing wise'.)

Rhythmical transposition should also serve to dislodge an epithet from its musical containment, so that its meaning once again comes to the forefront of the receptive consciousness. A noun-and-epithet phrase appearing in an uncharacteristic position in the rhythmic movement of the line ought to call attention to itself; so also should an epithet used in isolation. For the first case, consider Homer's use of ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν in the seventh verse of the *Iliad*, its stresses straddling the rhythmic division of the line, as compared with his later use of this phrase always in the second part of the line, as an almost titular epithet of royalty (often with Agamemnon's name). Does not the first use call special attention to the sense, setting off Agamemnon in the line as a king of men, in conflict with a hero whose innate power has a more divine origin? For the second case, consider the marvellously vivid effect created by Athena's use of her epithet as a very personal kind of proper name: when she complains in the *Iliad* about Zeus' preferment of Thetis over her, she insists that there will come a day when he will call her his 'dear γλαυκῶπις' again (*Il.* 8.373).

In other cases, the epithet in isolation moves in the opposite direction: rather than a proper name, it becomes an adjective, a pointed predicate. Vivante cites a number of examples, such as θοός, ἀγήνωρ, λυγρός, λευγαλέος, στονόεις, and others, where an epithet when used in rhythmic isolation as a predicate takes on a peculiar and focused sense, sometimes contrasting with its apparent meaning inside the noun–epithet phrase.[10] It is as though the lexical signification of these epithets is thrown into peculiarly sharp relief when they are removed from their more aural and evocative role within the dance phrase. To stretch a point, one might even say that the epithet and the adjective are different words. The capacity for an epithet to register in Homer as both the most proper of proper names, as well as the most finely adjectival of predicates, is entirely comprehensible in terms of the choral origins of Homer's verse.

[10] Vivante, *The Epithets in Homer*, 105–6.

What is merely an aesthetic observation in Vivante, a distinction made purely in terms of the registration of effects upon a listener, becomes grounded in a fact of composition and in the latent roots of epic performance.

In general, Vivante's theory of Homeric aesthetics, presented in *The Epithets in Homer*, is thoroughly vindicated by a restoration of the choral element in epic composition. From a purely literary point of view, he is led to distinguish between narrative and representation, between the intentional and relational use of things in speech on the one hand, and the pure representation of objects on the other.[11] It is in this last category that the noun–epithet phrases work their magic. In one of his most stimulating chapters, Vivante accounts for the relative dearth of epithets in Homer's dialogue and speeches:

The pure representation of things … tends to be submerged in certain instances of direct speech. When we speak to another person we usually have some purpose in view: to ask a question or give news, to approve or reproach, to warn or encourage. In such cases we make an issue, we drive a point. Any thing we mention subserves some other interest. There is no dwelling on things for their own sake. Imagination gives way to will or mere curiosity.

It follows that there is little room for epithets in speeches which mainly pursue an ulterior purpose. Some passages of Homer give us a cue. When the same object is mentioned in a speech and in the accompanying representation, it often happens that it has an epithet in the latter but not in the former. Thus, in *Od.* 21.176 Antinous orders Melanthius: 'Come now, Melanthius, burn the fire in the hall …'. And in 21.181, we find: 'So he said, and Melanthius kindled the weariless fire.' This variation is quite natural. When Antinous thinks of fire, it is merely for the purpose of melting the fat and greasing the bow; but when Melanthius actually sets off the flame, it is fire itself which is at the center of the picture.[12]

We are then given a sizable number of other instances of this variation. It would seem that if the speeches are naturally less concerned with mere representation, it is the speaker himself who is bodied forth in his vivid presence: Homer usually summons him before a speech with his signature line of characteristic epithets.

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[11] Ibid. 18–26.
[12] Ibid. 27.

There are times, however, when a speaker in Homer does become interested in things for their own sake, when his mind is carried away to a far-off place, or he imagines the future, or dwells on the memories of things past. In such cases the speaker is as interested as the epic bard in the evocation of a presence. Here is the part of Andromache's speech to Hector where she remembers her sad history, translated by Vivante so as to bring out the epithets, together with his luminous commentary:

My father did Achilles-the-god-born slay
when he conquered the well-placed city of Cilicia
Thebes-of-the-lofty-gates; Eetion then he struck down,
and stripped him not, in his heart he felt awe,
but buried him together with his arms-wondrously-wrought
and heaped a mound above; around it elms were grown
by the mountain-nymphs, daughters-of-Zeus-aegis-bearing-god.
And the seven brothers who were with me in the house
all in one single day were sped down to Hades;
them strong-footed god-born Achilles slew
as they were tending the oxen-of-trailing-gait and the white-fleeced sheep.
My mother who was queen under forest-rich Placos
hither was brought with all her possessions,
but he released her in exchange of measureless ransom,
and in my father's hall Artemis struck her the goddess-of-arrows.
Hector, you are now to me father and stately mother
and brother, and you are my flourishing husband . . .   (6.414–30)

Grief here stirs the imagination. Andromache is an unwitting artist. Her present feeling naturally overflows into past perspectives, touching experience into imagery and acquiring plastic power. This is not narrative but evocation. It is as if new blood were injected into the dead; and the envisaged scenes burst into full momentary evidence. The epithets are, therefore, at home. They fix the occasions where they belong. See how strongly implanted is the locality of what happened—the city of Thebes, Eetion's burial ground, the pasture lands, the queen's home. Especially the oxen-of-trailing-gait and the white-fleeced sheep have a startling effect through sheer representation: here is the tranquility of daily life suddenly swept away. So strong is the realization of the events themselves in time and place that all biographical detail is left out. We are not even told the names of Andromache's mother and brothers, but the sharp identities of 'brother' and 'stately mother' arise,

as it were, from the past to crown Hector's living image as its ultimate attributes.[13]

For a modern reader, it takes a certain practice in passivity to allow the noun-and-epithet phrases to register their effects upon the imagination, so as to arrest and to manifest an object or a person as they pass by in the stream of the verse. This is a practice in pure audition, prior, if that is possible, to interpretation. The rendering of such substantives in Homer is a constant phenomenon, the meat of the verse, not the relish—'sheer representation' rather than emphasis. One wonders how dancing this verse, or simply *imagining* the dancing it out, might affect its registration and meaning. Dancers or auditors who know the dance, as did the Phaeacians and the Ithacan suitors, are unlike readers in that they are not simply passive. Whether their movement is actual, vicarious, or purely imaginative, dancers *engage* the bard's words at the same time that they stimulate and support his voice. (I have experienced this stimulus and support in a choral performance of Homer.) How does an accompanying dance, or the familiarity with an accompanying dance, affect the registration of epithets and adjectives, of recurrent phrases and enjambments, even of nouns and verbs, in dancer and singer or in rhapsode and listener? This orchestic engagement of the Homeric auditor, whether he actually danced or merely sat engaged, must remain both a crucial and an elusive factor as we assess the production and the reception of Homeric performance, and analyse a performance text. In the performing of modern classical music, we have come to a stage where the audience no longer knows the rhythms of the repertoire as dance rhythms, and yet the tradition continues. Is this mere inertia, or an ultimate stage of development?

Parry observed that Homer uses the noun–epithet phrase ἔπεα πτερόεντα in the line announcing a speech when the coming speaker has already been the subject of the preceding verses, and the use of the speaker's name would be 'clumsy'.[14] This observation was a part of his attempt to refute those who claim a special emotional

[13] Ibid. 31.

[14] Milman Parry, 'About Winged Words', in *The Making of Homeric Verse*, ed. Adam Parry, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971, 414.

significance for 'winged words' in context. Parry is surely right that the alleged emotional intensity is spurious, and that Homer is avoiding repetition. But why does Homer do this? Parry professes an interest in gaining 'the sense of style which is proper to oral song',[15] but he is content here to rest with a negative aesthetic admonition about the avoidance of clumsiness, which may well be derived from literary instincts, and is certainly too vague to be specific to oral song. Neither speech nor art is created in a vacuum; an analysis of style cannot proceed solely on the basis of the production of the speaker. (Neither can it proceed solely on the basis of reception, as a pure aesthetics.) Words are winged because they must cross the gap to an audience—dancing or seated—in whom the effects of style are realized. A speaker is not free to follow his convenience when his listener is his critic. Why does Homer avoid repeating the speaker's name? He is in the business of elucidating a narrative foreground, which is pleasing to his audience in its variety and in the rapidity of its evolution. When the speaker is already there, it is the words themselves that Homer sometimes chooses to bring into focus, summoning them to the foreground in anticipation of the speech by means of their characteristic evocative epithet. The germ of Vivante's theory therefore arises immediately in the answer to the question begged by Parry.

It should be noted that Parry here speaks only of clumsiness, 'break[ing] the style badly' and 'spoiling the style'.[16] Although he quite obviously means to imply it, for some reason Parry never explicitly states that Homer avoids repeating the speaker's name for reasons of style. *Does* Parry's Homer avoid repetition? How might such avoidance as a stylistic desideratum be squared with the 'formulaic' style ascribed by oral theory to Homer? Only the restoration of the choric element to epic can resolve such a paradox. Repetition experienced as such—for example, the repetition of a subject's name instead of a pronoun—must be avoided in any narrative style. It is indeed clumsy. But the repetition of rhythmic phrases in an ambience of cyclic recurrence creates a self-substantial music; it generates

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[15] Ibid. 418.
[16] Ibid. 414.

for the purposes of progressive narrative a choral signifier, whose lexical component comes to be only the most abstract of three, in relation to the power of rhythm and melody to evoke the presence of an object. Unlike Parry's, Vivante's is a true oral theory in that it attempts to look to the totality, in production *and* reception, of the performed word. But whereas Parry's neglects the latter in favour of the former, Vivante's theory of production depends entirely on his theory of reception; that is, a perceived effect simply *becomes* the motive for a composer's deployment of the means. The question of how such means could have been discovered—the counter-intuitive notion, in the context of narrative, of repeated noun-and-epithet phrases, a notion abandoned by later hexameter poets—remains opaque. Oral theory of either sort is therefore not sufficient to account for the subtleties of repetition and its avoidance in Homer: both for diachronic and synchronic reasons, *choral* theory must be developed for the criticism of Homeric style.

In developing an aesthetic theory like Vivante's one must remember that Homer is the artist, and not the artifact. He is a master of mimetic effects, such as the story within a story. He knew how to draw the most wondrous similes ever drawn. He is also likely to be the master of his epithets, for all that at this level of composition he is engaging directly the metrical givens and the recurrent aesthetics of the dance. One needs to remember that even so generally accurate a formula as, say, 'when Homer wants to bring the present actuality of an object into the foreground, he sings it out with its epithets, whereas when an object is subservient to other narrative ends, the epithets are suppressed', will not be without its exceptions in the hands of a genius who is alive to his techniques. Consider the following passage from the *Odyssey*, pointed out to me by Arthur Adkins, when Athena leaves Odysseus on the doorstep of Alcinous' court at Phaeacia (*Od.* 7.78–83):

>   ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
> πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον, λίπε δὲ Σχερίην ἐρατεινήν,
> ἵκετο δ' ἐς Μαραθῶνα καὶ εὐρυάγυιαν Ἀθήνην,
> δῦνε δ' Ἐρεχθῆος πυκινὸν δόμον. αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς
> Ἀλκινόου πρὸς δώματ' ἴε κλυτά· πολλὰ δέ οἱ κῆρ
> ὥρμαιν' ἱσταμένῳ, πρὶν χάλκεον οὐδὸν ἵκεσθαι.

off went Grey-eyes, Athena,
over the sea unvintaged, and she deserted lovely Scheria,
and came to Marathon, to Athens of the broad ways, and she
entered Erechtheus' close-built house. Odysseus, however,
did approach the famous halls of Alcinous; much was his heart
disturbed as he stood there, before he arrived at the brazen threshold.

Note the almost over-emphatic floridity of the epithets, as the animate locations on Athena's journey are bodied forth. But then we see the name of Odysseus, unadorned and lonely. The bounty of the goddess's destinations, as it is expressed in the music of the epithets, seems to underscore the bereavement of the solitary traveller she has left behind with only the syllables of his name. To say that Odysseus is pushed into the background because he has no epithet is to assert the opposite, in this case, of the poetic reality. A more effective means can scarcely be imagined to present the situation of Odysseus in all its poignancy, alone and unknown before a strange and awesome palace, than the solitary name. From Homer's perspective, it would seem that the rules of his poetry are made to be broken.

My sense is that Homer is constantly aware of his story turning into music, of the almost limitless possibilities of juxtaposition and variation, of 'backgrounding' and 'foregrounding' that are opened to him when the nascent musical qualities of words are made vivid through their recurrence in a rhythmic pattern. The story is certainly paramount: Homer in translation is largely a Homer with his native stylizations removed, and readers' interest in the tale itself, presented in this form, remains unflagging. In one sense Homer's achievement can be seen as one of transcendence over an orchestic ritual. But as an auditor of his native Greek, one becomes aware of the linear aims of the storyteller constantly meeting up with an immanent circling sensibility, and finding delight and repose.

The singer's rest is a real phenomenon in Homer, but it must finally be understood in the sense with which rests have always been understood by musicians. As Thomas Jefferson once noted:

[Homer] has discovered that in any rhythmical composition the ear is pleased to find at certain regular intervals a pause where it may rest, by which it may divide the composition into parts, as a piece of music is divided into bars. He contrives to mark this division by a pause in the

sense or at least by an emphatical word which may force the pause so that the ear may feel the regular return of the pause.[17]

The rest is silence, as Hamlet said, and in music—perhaps as he intended to observe in those dying words—it is the silence that gives context, and hence meaning, to the sound. There are dynamic pauses within each line of Homer, and a rest between each line. The cyclic evocation of a feast, or an arming warrior, in one line or many, is also a kind of rest within the larger movement of the story, never obtrusive and always welcome, the return of a familiar face in the unfolding progression. Recall the Faroese dance: recurrence for a dancer is inevitable, essential, restful, and definitive. I had used to think that the welcomeness of these passages might have been a Greek student's illusion; their recurrence meant that they were the first passages I could read at sight, as though natively, without the embarrassment of having to look up words. Their peculiar quality is testified to, however, even by readers in translation. An 'improvising' Yugoslav bard must also be concerned that his singer's rest not obtrude *as such* into the listener's consciousness. It is only a sort of listener who has somehow imbibed an antidote to the story teller's spell—someone who by inclination or even by principle is obliged to exclude himself from an immersion in his fellow listeners' reverie, and so to be doomed of an evening to observe and not to participate—an anthropologist, say, with his tape recorder—who might feel impeded by the natural pauses and recurrences, the repeats and *da capos* of even the most virtuosic of bardic performances. In the rapt and timeless moment of re-enactment, we shall catch him looking at his watch.

What can we finally say about the epithets *in situ*, bound up with their nouns in the metrical building blocks, neither substituted for nor transposed? Do they mean anything? Can the context of the story exert a semantic pull and dislodge them, as it were, from the musical reverie, to draw out their meaning in a given situation? On the face of it, it is hard to see that the meaning of a word could ever be completely submerged in a musical setting; but the question of

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[17] Thomas Jefferson, 'Thoughts on Prosody,' in Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language, and the Culture of Performance*, Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993, 7–10.

prominence and registration would seem to be crucial and subtle, and must revert ultimately to a question of taste. In these cases the choral analysis can give no specific instruction. The 'life-giving' earth that hides the dead, the case of φυσίζοος αἶα, seems to me to be redolent of a pathos that is peculiarly and deeply Iliadic. On the other hand, Homer's use of a heroic epithet in the phrase 'blameless Aegisthus' (*Od.* 1.29), when Zeus is about to catalogue Aegisthus' adultery and unmanly usurpation, bespeaks a kind of irony that strikes me as consummately Odyssean. I have no apology for these views, except that they are vivid. These two examples excite debate precisely because they are not extravagant poetic gestures, but deployments of conventional themes in the usual parts of the line. This is also why they are so daring: in each case, Homer risks the very fabric of his music upon their success.

B. DANCE, LANGUAGE, AND SONG

The second aspect of Homer's presentation of Demodocus' song of the gods that must be noted before we proceed, is the simple fact that the dancers come first (see *Od.* 8.262 ff.). The dance claims an original and independent status, and its own measure of skill: as we have noted, Homer indicates that the Phaeacian youths have some expertise (8.263). The rhythmic drumming of their feet upon the dance floor has already filled the air and overwhelmed the senses before Demodocus strikes up his prelude. We imagine him rooted at the centre, his consciousness suffused on all sides with the Muses' rhythm, which is the matrix from which his syncopated phrases take shape and become winged.

Under these circumstances, we should certainly not be surprised that the divisions and emphases of the dance rhythm leave their tangible mark on the phrasings of the verse. But it seems that the effects of the dance are felt even at the level of the syllable. I have already alluded to the phenomenon of metrical lengthening.[18] Let me

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[18] My main informant is William F. Wyatt, *Metrical Lengthening in Homer*, Rome: Ateneo, 1969.

suggest that the scenario of an origin in choral performance provides a compelling extra-linguistic cause for this phenomenon: only an extra-linguistic force will account for all the cases without a residue of embarrassing anomalies.

It must be stressed that in supporting a metrical rather than a linguistic account for lengthening, we are in no sense speculating about the prehistory of epic metre, but following the direct evidence of the *Odyssey* about the priority of the dance in performance. Even apart from this evidence, it is scarcely conceivable that the phonologically modified language and isochronous, isometric rhythm of the hexameter in any sense *preceded* the practice of dancing to it. Phonological and prosodic modification due to the pressure of an external rhythmic source, including an actual shift of accent over syllables, has been demonstrated in the case of Spanish song.[19] English is unusual in resisting accent shift in songs,[20] but melodic settings in English do display a latitude of syllabic modification (such as lengthening, or restoring the quality of reduced vowels) that can be permitted or exploited in such a context, without a violation of the linguistic bonds that link performer and audience. (In some cases, there can even be change of stress; consider 'when the rain washés you clean you'll know', from the song 'Dreams' by Fleetwood Mac.[21])

'Poetic licence' is a notion that is anathema to a linguist—and rightly, because as an explanation for anomalies it seems to nullify attempts at analysis or reconstruction. But some version of this notion seems to be required to account for the Homeric practice in fitting known phonological quanta to the metre. West speaks of 'prosodic licence', and comments, 'On the whole the poets seem to have been content to let their verses turn out as best they might.'[22] To be sure, 'licence' is something *granted*, and ultimately it is language that must grant poetic licence. Poets sometimes invent words but they do not invent language, and one should not belittle the heuristic

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[19] Richard D. Janda and Terrell E. Morgan, '*El acentó dislocadó—pues cantadó—castellanó*: On Explaining Stress Shift in Song Texts from Spanish (and Certain Other Romance Languages)', in David Birdsong and Jean-Pierre Montreuil (eds.), *Advances in Romance Linguistics*, Dordrecht: Foris Publications Holland (Publications in Language Sciences, 28), 1988, 151–70.

[20] Richard D. Janda, personal communication, 2002.

[21] Ibid.   [22] West, *Greek Metre*, 38–9.

value of assuming a diachronic account for synchronic anomalies. Cases of lengthening and shortening that cannot be given *some* kind of historical account must be rare, in the nature of things. Students of Homeric rhythm as well as historical linguists owe a great deal to the inferred digamma. But it must be acknowledged that in dealing with poetic artifacts, linguistic accounts must be descriptive and after the fact. The varieties of phonological alteration to prose speech that are made in the service of verse and music can in no way be predicted. This is because poetry is predatory when it comes to developing forms to fit a musical need. (Let us speak of 'developing' rather than 'coining'.) This is not at all to say that poetic language is not rule-governed. All the types of Greek poetry demonstrate the opposite in their deployment of language. But linguistic hounds must acknowledge that at least in the case of Homer, they are on the track of a predator. And anomalies remain.

It must remain beyond the purview of linguistics to account for speakers and speech that 'break the rules'. Let us be clear, however, that someone who breaks the rules is not someone who is lawless. He is in fact as rule-governed as the rest of his community, and quite the opposite of lawless. But the attempt to make Homer seem 'law-abiding', rather than rule-governed, cannot be successful.

The new theory of the accent *does* help us formulate one linguistic rule, however, that bears on metrical lengthening. The lengthened vowel seems always to occur *before* or *with* the onset of the contonation, so that the crucial following vowel is left unaffected (e.g. ἀνήρ, Οὔλυμπος, εἰλήλυθα). Recall that a vowel lengthened immediately after the rise in the voice would take the down-glide and become the most accentually prominent syllable in the word. This rule therefore prevents metrical lengthening from modifying, by changing the position of prominence, the prosodic culmination of a word in Greek.

It was Dionysius Thrax who first distinguished between syllables that were long 'by position' (θέσει) and syllables that were long 'by nature' (φύσει). This was a grammarian's distinction, involving the sorting and counting of consonants, intended to explain the poetic usage of previous centuries. The influence of the sophists may also be felt in a distinction between convention and nature. The modern account of the syllable would simply describe these longs by position

as 'closed'. The distinction appears to apply to lyric and drama: within these types of verse, syllables measured as long are either closed or contain naturally long vowels. With allowance for a category of doubtful syllables, there appears to be a correspondence in lyric between the syllables that are defined to be long in linguistic terms and the strong positions of metrical feet.

There is, however, a more natural descriptive use of long by position ($\theta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota$), with a particular application to Homer, who does not seem always to respect the lyric poets' fealty to correspondence between phonology and metre. On this interpretation long $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota$ means 'long in virtue of the thesis', and serves as a merely descriptive cover for all cases of syllables with naturally short vowels that were placed in the strong positions of epic feet. Homer is comparatively indiscriminate on this point: aside from naturally long syllables, he not only uses syllables in the thesis which are, in the later sense, long by position, but also syllables with naturally short vowels which have been metrically lengthened, as well as syllables which are simply short, such as the initial syllables of $\delta\iota\acute{\alpha}$ and $\dot{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon\acute{\iota}$. This is a grab-bag of cases, from an ancient grammarian's or a modern linguist's point of view. The only apparent common feature in all cases of lengthened short vowels and syllables in Homer is fundamentally extra-linguistic; it is the simple fact that they appear in the thesis, the strong part of the dance foot. We see here a manifest effect of the independence and priority of the dance component in Homer, in the subservience of the phonological substance of speech to metrical pressure. The metrically lengthened vowel is a birthmark of the epic genre, where speech had to be adapted to suit an autonomous, non-linguistic metrical pattern.

In lyric, on the other hand, the dance follows the word: a peculiar sequence of long and short syllables generates in each $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\lambda os$ a peculiar metrical pattern. It is therefore entirely natural that in lyric, where the word has a measure of priority, it should have been a consistent linguistic rule, rather than an orchestic, metrical necessity, which governed the distinctions between syllable lengths and their deployment in verse. From a practical point of view, the dancer depends upon a linguistic rule to abstract the peculiar sequence of feet from the words. In lyric, after all, it is only when the dancer has determined, as a speaker of Greek, which syllables are naturally short

and which are long, whether by nature or position, that he can recognize the dance pattern at all.

The sense I am suggesting for long θέσει in epic involves a natural corollary: a category of syllables (unattested in the grammarians) which are short in virtue of the arsis (ἄρσει). The epic dactylic rhythm would not only lengthen syllables that were naturally short, but sometimes shorten syllables that were naturally long or long by position. We see striking examples of both types, long in thesis (θέσει) and short in arsis (ἄρσει), in the initial alphas of the same name, in the phrase Ἄρες, Ἄρες βροτολοιγέ (5.31). Genitives in –ου, such as περικλυτοῦ Ἡφαίστοιο, may be explained in terms of the Atticized spelling of an original Mycenaean genitive in –οο, which is elided in hiatus to –ο'; but it is harder to explain in historical terms the shortening of dative endings in –ῳ. Here we have a long diphthong (of perhaps three morae?) which can apparently be performed as a short syllable in the hexameter. The purely philological explanation, that correption is induced by hiatus, is made vain by the prominent counter-example, ἀντιθέῳ Ὀδυσῆι, where the –ῳ is clearly long despite the hiatus. To give a judgement that is empirically sound, one has simply to say that in epic, this ending in –ῳ is made short by the arsis of the foot and long by the thesis. Such a formulation would also cover the cases of 'doubtful' or 'common' syllables, composed of a short vowel followed by a mute and a liquid, in *all* genres of Greek poetry: these syllables are best described as long in thesis but short in arsis.

Such a distinction is not likely to appeal to historical linguists, who are bound to see it as merely a restatement of the facts. Where else is lengthening to occur but in the thesis, and shortening in the arsis? The true significance of the distinction, however, is in the way that it points to the extra-linguistic nature of Greek metre. What it suggests is that in a broader set of circumstances for the Homeric hexameter, and a narrower one for lyric, there was the possibility of the 'ictual' determination of quantity. Often in the case of the doubtful syllables this also meant an ictual determination of accent. (In the remarkable phrase Ἄρες, Ἄρες cited above, we appear to have a case of the ictual determination both of quantity and accent in the same word. This case seems intended by Homer to confound the purely linguistic metrist with the vividness of its juxtaposition.) Both quantity and

accent are phonological features. If a metre is a product of a language, it should be difficult to find such ictual determination of phonological features in that language's metrical poetry, even under the purview of a set of rules. The existence of doubtful syllables is itself an internal evidence for the extra-linguistic source of metre in Greek. The case is different for English metre. The 'never's in King Lear's famous iambic line *must* remain trochees. But where there is an extra-linguistic source of metre, as in opera settings, for example, we should not be surprised to find a limited ictual inducement of quantity and secondary stress. Look for it in Gilbert and Sullivan.

Antoine Meillet has pointed to the equality in length of arsis and thesis in the dactyl as 'une innovation du grec'.[23] This fundamental isochrony in the foot, unique to Greek, is itself evidence of an orchestic origin for Greek metre. A language-derived metre would rather be expected to build itself out of contrasting time pulses, as Meillet well understood. An isochronous foot generates isometric lines. Isometry is a prevalent characteristic of dance and of dance music. Neither Greek nor any other Indo-European language appears to have been designed to reinforce isochronous dactyls.

As Pierre Chantraine has said, 'il apparaît que le rhythme naturel de la langue grecque s'adaptait mal à la métrique rigide de l'hexamètre dactylique.'[24] Chantraine gives numerous examples of numerous forms of phonological and even morphological adaptations to metrical constraints in Homer, including certain verbs derived in $-\iota\zeta\omega$, a quite productive suffix in later poetic and non-poetic contexts, to replace unmetrical forms in $-\epsilon\omega$.[25] (We owe all our own '-isms' to this ending.) Homer did not invent this form; he rather exploited an Ionic tendency to 'create verbs in $-\iota\zeta\omega$'.[26] One motive in this case might have been to avoid contraction in some of the inflected forms of verbs in $-\epsilon\omega$, the rest of which freely occur alongside the necessary forms from the $-\iota\zeta\omega$ paradigm (e.g. $\alpha\ddot{\iota}\tau\epsilon\iota$ from $-\epsilon\omega$ but $\alpha\dot{\iota}\tau\dot{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ from $-\iota\zeta\omega$).[27] It is therefore appropriate to speak not just of the alteration

[23] Antoine Meillet, *Les Origines indo-européennes des mètres grecs*, 1923, Paris, 57.

[24] Pierre Chantraine, *Grammaire Homérique*, Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1942, 94.

[25] Ibid. 95 and 95–112.

[26] G. P. Shipp, *Studies in the Language of Homer*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972, 148.

[27] Ibid.

of forms (lengthening or shortening of syllables) due to metrical pressure, but also of poetic neologisms and the creation of forms—some of them redundant—and hence of the creation of an epic diction in Homer. The redundancy in some cases of Homeric coinage with respect to unmetrical equivalents distinguishes it from the Shakespearean kind of coining; the Homeric creativity is, at least in part, *necessitated* by the verse form. Such a diction—as well as the very notion of metrical constraint—arises immediately and naturally from the adaptation of speech to a fixed dance rhythm.

Note that on Chantraine's abundant evidence, there is a generation of new forms in Homer alongside forms *metri gratia*. If the musical needs of the hexameter had granted Homer a complete and general licence, he should *only* have had to resort to lengthening and shortening to fit his Greek to the metre. In addition, lengthening appears to be arbitrarily restricted to one syllable in a given word. Hence in the case of ἀθάνατος (all vowels naturally short), ἀ̄θάνατος occurs, but not the equally dactylic ἀθᾱ́νατος. Perhaps words that had to undergo metrical lengthening in a syllable in order to appear in the hexameter acquired a 'melodic identity' that militated against alternate manifestations. Words that appear in more than one quantitative shape (e.g. Ἀχιλ(λ)εύς) tend to be proper names, and limit the variation to one syllable. If it is possible to develop such things as 'rules of licence' for Homeric practice in these cases, comparative evidence should be sought not in purely poetic traditions but in examples of the setting of language to music.

There is ancient evidence of a direct connection between epic diction and dance. At *Laws* 795d–e, Plato prescribes dancing as a part of the gymnastic education of the young. He then distinguishes a type of dancing as one that belongs to those who 'imitate the diction of the Muse' (Μούσης λέξιν μιμουμένων). This usage is striking, all the more because it is not meant to be controversial or to call attention to itself, but merely to be descriptive. The relation of dance (ὄρχησις) to speech (λέξις)—note the order—is described as one of imitation. What sort of dance is there which could be said to *imitate* a style of speech? Conversely, what manner of speech style or diction can be said to serve as an object of imitation for dancers?

It appears that the verses of our extant Greek poetry could have been used for dance practice. Speech of the Muse (Μούσης λέξις)

may refer generally to poetic speech; or it may rather be that Plato has the diction of the epic hexameter particularly in mind. It is likely not a coincidence that the two types of dancing Plato prescribes in this passage, one imitating the language of the Muse, with a view to a certain grandeur and liberality of posture, the other more gymnastic and athletic, aiming at physical conditioning, correspond to the two types Alcinous has his Phaeacian youths display for Odysseus: when they have finished their performance with Demodocus of the tale of Ares and Aphrodite, two youths are singled out to make a solo display of their gymnastic prowess, throwing and catching a ball in mid-air. It would follow that Plato's first category of dance, imitating the λέξις of the Muse, is the same as that signified by 'the dance of the Muses', a phrase that we have seen used in an unqualified sense to refer to the seventeen-beat hexameter.

One reading of Plato's phrase could be seen to support Nagy's conviction that 'traditional phraseology generated meter rather than vice versa'.[28] (I should note that Nagy himself does not relate metre to dance.) Chantraine's considered observation weighs strongly against this view, however. Plato's phrasing reflects a symbiotic process of generation: dancers who imitate the λέξις of the *Muse* are dancers who imitate the poetry of a dancer, who move in sympathy with a kind of utterance that is itself inspired by dance. The dancers circle the bard; and we have not had far to look to find the unmistakable imprint of the arsis and thesis of the dancers' feet upon the Homeric λέξις. It can be seen at the level of the syllable, in the phenomenon of metrical lengthening; it can be seen at the level of the word and the line, in the creation of an epic diction, in the dancing noun-and-epithet phrases, and in the aesthetics of rhythmic recurrence; it is to be discovered at the level of broader narrative in the phenomenon of ring composition. None of these things would have been mysterious to Plato and his readership. Small wonder if in a rather straightforward way, he saw the relationship between dance and the language of Homeric verse as mimetic.

Aristotle also observed that epic speech was peculiarly marked. He points out that when we speak hexameters, we 'transgress' the normal 'conversational harmony' (ἐκβαίνοντες τῆς λεκτικῆς ἁρμονίας,

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[28] Nagy, *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter*, 143.

Poetics 1449^{a}27–8). (Perhaps we should note his diction: ἐκβαίνειν, 'step out from'.) The Cyclops episode in the *Odyssey* requires that the normal prosody of Greek be recognizable in an epic rendition; but Aristotle's testimony suggests that there was a perceived prosodic modification in speaking hexameters. The new theory of the accent predicts just such a limited modification in the relation between ὀξύς and βαρύς elements, the elements of ἁρμονία, in the context of the dactylic hexameter. My theory depends upon both the location of the beginning of the contonation (which is ὀξύς or rising), and the quantity of the following vowels. Any change in vowel quantity should therefore necessitate a change in accentual performance. This is exactly the situation we find in the phenomenon of metrical lengthening and shortening. In the former case, however, we have observed a rule that seems to prevent accentual modification. But with the shortened vowels, we see flagrant changes in prosody. The word ἀσπέτῳ in prose, for example, is barytone on the ultima (in the parlance of the new theory); while in Homer's phrase ἀσπέτῳ ὄμβρῳ, with a shortened final syllable, it is almost certainly oxytone on the penult. Περικλυτοῦ in prose is barytone on the ultima (a masculine cadence); but in περικλυτοῦ Ἡφαίστοιο, it is probably suppressed as a grave (περικλυτὸ).

In addition, there may be cases where the lengthening of short vowels does in fact occur after the onset of the contonation: words such as ἔριδι (*Iliad* 1.8), εὐχόμενος (43), δόμεναι (98), ἱλασσάμενοι (100) are all oxytone on the antepenult in prose, given the quantities of the following vowels, but they are so positioned in the verse that the short ultima lands on the thesis of a dactyl. Perhaps the ultima was lengthened in these cases, causing a shift of accent, or inducing a secondary stress, which would have also been distinctive of epic harmony. It is impossible to determine here whether ictus induced a new primary or secondary accent, or whether the original prose accent produced a distinctive counterpoint. (What must be resisted in this case is the attempt to form linguistic rules in the face of the lost reality of performance. Inference as to what might occur here from apparently analogous situations is illegitimate if the analogue does not involve verse composed in relation to an extra-linguistic, quantitative dance rhythm. Native informants are of course the only safe source.)

Hesiod appears to delight in the effects of the hexameter upon the sound of Greek, and to exploit them in such a way as to suggest that his audience shared his delight in the prosodic variations that characterize the Muses' song. Consider his use of the word ῥέα in lines 5–7 of the *Works and Days*:

> ῥέα μὲν γὰρ βριάει, ῥέα δὲ βριάοντα χαλέπτει,
> ῥεῖα δ' ἀρίζηλον μινύθει καὶ ἄδηλον ἀέξει,
> ῥεῖα δέ τ' ἰθύνει σκολιὸν καὶ ἀγήνορα κάρφει.

In the thesis of the first foot of line 5, the vowels appear in synizesis; since the rise in the contonation occurs in the first element, the down-glide would have occurred in the second, and the fused vowels were likely to have been rendered as though with a circumflex. At all events the word has to be a monosyllable, very likely barytone. In the double-short arsis of the third foot, however, the vowels are likely to sound separately, and so the same word becomes disyllabic and should sound oxytone on the penult. Then at the beginnings of the following lines 6 and 7, the word appears in its metrically lengthened form (ῥεῖα), and hence it is sung as a barytone on the penult. Surely this variation in the prosody of a single word is a conscious exploitation of the hexameter's musical effects, which is entirely consonant with the audience's expectations of song.

The case of ῥέα is by no means an isolated incident, although it is certainly striking, coming at the beginning of the *Works and Days* and seeming to emphasize the ease of Zeus' power in relation to mortal pretension. Whenever Hesiod repeats a word in this kind of trope, he appears to draw out its intrinsic potential for rhythmic and melodic variety in a hexameter setting. Consider that even an oxytone spondee such as αἰδώς, with no possibility of synizesis or metrical lengthening or shortening, occurring in the same place (the first foot) in three successive lines (317–19), is rendered in each case with a different prosody: in the first line with its accent suppressed (or grave); in the second, with a pause following, which releases the oxytone; and in the third, with its full contonation completed by a trailing enclitic (τοι):

> αἰδὼς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθὴ κεχρημένον ἄνδρα κομίζειν,
> αἰδώς, ἥ τ' ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησιν·
> αἰδώς τοι πρὸς ἀνολβίῃ, θάρσος δὲ πρὸς ὄλβῳ.

Each of these effects occurs in everyday speech, which suggests that what poet and audience alike appreciate is variety. When the peculiarly poetic, metrical effects, such as *synizesis* and lengthening, are unavailable, the variety of prose effects will do just as well. This in turn suggests that there is a continuum in the hexameter between the prosodic effects of prose and those of verse, rather than a disjunction between prosaic and song-like styles. The epic verse of Homer and Hesiod did not sound like everyday speech, but neither was it sung in a Euripidean or operatic sense; it was, rather, speech song, musical narrative, the λέξις Μούσης.

The effects of metre are the effects of dance; all these effects are therefore due, once again, to the relation of language to dance that is sketched out for us by Homer in his depiction of the choral song of Demodocus.

C. METRE AND MEMORY

Nagy's attempt to generate the hexameter from dactylic expansions of the rhythms in primitive, allegedly traditional phraseology, is ingenious and often revelatory. He manages to motivate Hermann's Bridge,[29] along with other structural features of the line. The method generates by way of inference from analysis; while this approach seems inevitably to entail a 'mechanics of composing',[30] via metrical building blocks, it need not preclude the aesthetic unity of whole Homeric lines observed by Vivante and others. The derivation of the hexameter from the pherecratean, however, has more to do with mathematics, than it has to do with either the linguistic quality of poetry surviving in these metres, or with their original, physical, orchestic reality. To begin with, the pherecratean is a catalectic or cadence metre in relation to a glyconic. (We shall consider this relationship in more detail in Chapter 8.) It may at first sight make sense to say that a pherecratean has a synchronic relationship with a glyconic (i.e. it is the catalectic version) and that it has a diachronic relationship with the hexameter (it is the parent). The problem

[29] Ibid. 72–4.   [30] Ibid. 99.

methodologically is that the nature of 'metrical opposition' is not analogous to phonemic or lexical oppositions in a synchronic state. To say that the glyconic/pherecratean relation is synchronic is like saying that $2 + 3 = 5$ is a merely synchronic relation, or the relation between a fifth and an octave, or between male and female. The pherecratean does not exist without a glyconic; the catalectic version is derived from the original and exists in a definite musical relationship with it that is not determined by time or circumstance. There is not an opposition between them but a definite harmony. Every verse has to have a cadence: every glyconic or series of glyconics has to have a pherecratean. This is a fact of dance and rhythm, in no way analogous to a linguistic fact. Think about 'shave and a hair cut' (*bum bum* ba *bum bum*), which *has* to be followed by—'two bits' (*bum bum*). In his diachronic claim, Nagy seems to think that you can isolate the 'bum bum' from its context—in which case it loses all its rhythm—and derive a whole new rhythm backwards from it, in anticipation of it as, once again, a cadence. But the pherecratean's *being* as a cadence derives from its relation to its original partner; whereas the sequence of dactyls that Nagy grafts on to it would naturally rather seek a rhythmic cadence in cretic-based forms, to judge by lyric practice (as in dactylo-epitrite).

It is *not* illegitimate to isolate an element in a diachronic analysis—for example, the feature 'voice' in a consonantal sound change. The question becomes, however: what in fact constitutes an isolable metrical element? If one were to rephrase the question as 'what is a *rhythmical* element?' one would immediately see that rhythmic patterns and oppositions occur that are in no way susceptible to a synchronic/diachronic analysis. Rather, the contrasting elements of rhythm remain constant and universal as long as we remain bipedal creatures who draw breath, and as long as numbers retain their properties.

Epic hexameter phrasing everywhere exhibits phonological and morphological adaptations, necessitated by the metre, while lyric metres depend upon and conform to the native quantities of words: the ubiquitous metrical pressure on linguistic form observed by Chantraine in the hexameter is nowhere to be found in lyric pherecrateans. Consider the implications of this for Nagy's hypothesis. Much of the 'formulaic' material in extant epic, which *does*

display phonological and morphological alteration, does not belong to the period that actually produced the metre; it must rather be interpreted as a later product of assimilation to the hexameter, which, most paradoxically, had to have displaced such traditional material as *did* once generate the metre, and so did in fact fit the form euphonically and naturally without phonological alteration. How could such a displacement have occurred? This paradox ought to discredit any attempt to 'derive' the hexameter from smaller Aeolic lyric units (this is also West's approach[31]). The paradox is that apparently 'language-driven' metres (Aeolics) are being asked to generate a metre whose extant poetry displays extravagant distortions of language. The maladaptation to Greek is not claimed for her lyric metres.

Oralists who work from the premiss that the dactylic hexameter is a product of the Greek language, ought to consider how expensive this assumption is for their belief in the traditional nature of Homeric diction. Once the facts of Chantraine's description are taken into account, one is obliged to conclude that Homer's language has *displaced* such native formulae as were required to generate the metre. Hence the premiss leads inexorably to the conclusion that Homer is *non-traditional*, that the extant diction of epic is an *innovation*, and that its meaning and implications can give us *no direct evidence of either traditional language or thought* as it bears on the Homeric poems themselves. An investigation into Homeric tradition through its diction must therefore begin by abandoning this premiss.

On his own terms, Nagy is obliged to argue that phrases producing the masculine (penthemimeral) caesura represent the 'least traditional component of epic hexameter'.[32] He suggests that their frequency may be due to the influence of the hemiepes of the pentameter from the elegiac couplet.[33] In other words, the frequency of the hemiepes at the opening of extant epic verse is partly due to the influence of the elegiac couplet—a form which already contains a hexameter! To accommodate Nagy we must presume a primitive,

[31] M. L. West, 'Greek Poetry 2000–700 B.C.', *Classical Quarterly*, 23 (1973), 179–92; id., *Greek Metre*, 35.

[32] Nagy, *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter*, 99.

[33] Ibid. 101.

unattested and yet widespread and productive and above all *native* version of the hexameter, in order to generate the hexameter in its later, extant and recognizable form, which, to judge by an authoritative linguistic description, very hardly accommodates the native phonology of Greek words.

Choral theory, by contrast, understands the frequency of penthemimeral caesura in the most natural and straightforward way. The masculine and feminine cadences which generate the two caesurae are original variants, in that both equally perform the function required by the theory—reinforcement of the third foot—while at the same time, as we have seen, a favouring of the feminine-trochaic can be accounted for in the structure of a surviving Greek folk dance.

It is in fact possible to claim that the penthemimeral caesura is 'later' than the trochaic, if 'later' means more disconnected from dance, seeing as the masculine cadence does not match up with the tropic point of the traditional dance. Possibly this sort of reinforcement reflects an aesthetic of recitation, where reinforcement of the third foot, of either variety, comes to be merely a desideratum of symmetry, as can be typed in other Greek and non-Greek stichic lines. If there is such a thing as this 'later' poetry in Homer, it may be expected also to show less observance of the peculiar diaeresis, and perhaps more accentual reinforcement of the fifth thesis instead. The key to this distinction is that caesura and diaeresis in the same line break the line into *three parts*. This alternative technique—that is, of accenting the fifth thesis to mark the orchestic resumption, rather than composing a diaeresis—may have helped to 'cross the gap', to make a unit out of the second half of the line and so to achieve the typical stichic symmetry of a two-part line of verse.

Consider the opening lines of the Odyssey:

> Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
> πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν·

Compare πολύτροπον, ὅς μάλα πολλὰ, manifesting retrogression and diaeresis after the trochaic caesura, with ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν, riding a single semantic wave of rhythm after a masculine cadence (Τροίης, with penthemimeral caesura) in the third foot. We could distinguish 'early' epic verse as being more strict about observing both the trochaic caesura and the diaeresis in tandem, while

'later', 'rhapsodic' verses, seeking symmetry in declamation, would perhaps be more indifferent as to the location of the caesura, and would rather accent the fifth thesis emphatically than compose a diaeresis. (Is the proem of the *Iliad*, which we have seen display this tendency in the fifth foot, therefore 'rhapsodic' in sensibility, and 'late'?) Unfortunately, however, Homer appears to come to us fully sprung and freely mixed, as the first two lines of the *Odyssey* indicate; the data required to make such a distinction would be difficult to gather, and not likely to be convincing even as to relative dating. Preponderances in definable epic samples, such as the Catalogue of Ships or Demodocus' song of Ares and Aphrodite, would obviously be worth investigating. But one would have to be sure that 'rhapsodic' composers positively avoided the three-part line and hence the diaeresis—unlikely in a poet covetous of the (presumably) familiar musical possibility given by this line division—and that 'bardic' composers both preferred the trochee mid-line and positively avoided barytonic emphasis of the fifth thesis as a way of marking the orchestic resumption—again, the latter is in no way a self-evident aesthetic aversion—before one could begin to interpret a musical preponderance in a particular sample as a clue to its age or to its intended mode of performance, or indeed as evidence of anything *but* an aesthetic choice. It is in fact the bucolic poets, known to be 'late', who best exemplify the connection to dance that produces the unusual diaeresis.

Convolutions in Nagy's argument are due ultimately to his premisses: 'Just as the Greek language is cognate with the Sanskrit language, so also the meters of Greek Lyric are cognate with the meters of Sanskrit Vedic.'[34] Nagy intends to buttress Meillet's theory of Indo-European metre where he feels there has been a capitulation in the case of Greek. But until it can be shown that other Indo-European metres were born in the context of something like Hellenic χορεία— that is to say, with a significant extra-linguistic component determining their proto-form—Greek poetry must claim a separate place amongst its cousins.

In large part, modern scholarship has neglected the nature of Homer's epics as musical texts: critics have interpreted a musical

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[34] Ibid. 1.

composition in literary terms. This is a story of neglected evidence. In the form and ambience of the round dance, we have a transparent motive for ring composition. In the dance's rhythmic structure, we see the natural genesis of a metrical phraseology. In the harmonic nature of Greek words, we find a transparent aesthetic motive for the recurrence of phrases. The absence of a theory that linked Greek prosody with verse forms has led to a neglect of prosody in general. How much error might have been prevented if the humble accent marks from Alexandria, staring at us on every page of Greek text, had not been disregarded. They remind us that to compose verse with Greek words is necessarily to compose verse with a harmonic element, together with a rhythmic and semantic substance. They help to remind us that Greek verse was χορεία.

Scholarship that has followed Parry does not all depend on Parry. Nagy's brilliant analyses of Homeric diction throughout *The Best of the Achaeans*, for example, lose nothing as analyses of Homer's diction. The method of gathering attestations and comparing usages in context so as to circumscribe the meaning of a term is not so much a technique to uncover the traditional—even when the material analysed is interpreted to be formulaic—as it is a technique of careful reading. Such a method is often applied, with no *actual* debt to oral theory, in Redfield's *Nature and Culture in the* Iliad, always with a revelatory result.[35] Arthur Adkins pleaded for this approach as one that treats words not as lexical entries with a number of meanings, but as *tools*, with uses.[36] David Grene would tell his new students that in its surviving corpus, and in its history as a corpus, ancient Greek is not a language but a liturgy. All ancient texts should therefore profit from being read with a lexicographer's care.

The notion that Homer's text is a window to tradition, or that it simply *is* a piece of tradition, arises immediately from Parry's hypothesis: Homer's composition is in fact oral, therefore his language is formulaic, therefore the text is traditional. Each phrase in the text, recurrent or not, thereby becomes a cultural repository. The

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[35] James M. Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the* Iliad, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975; see e.g. 171–9, 115–19.

[36] A. W. H. Adkins, *From The Many To The One*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970, 6.

hypothesis we offer in its place is that Homer's composition is aural and orchestic, therefore his language is recurrent, therefore the text is musical. The ancients knew Homer's text as a performance text, like a Mozart symphony or a Shakespeare play; they knew Homer only as their greatest poet. Modern Homerists after Wolf have implicitly called into question the poetic judgement, critical competence, and knowledge of history, not just in such figures as Plato and Aristotle, but also in Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Herodotus. Ancient witnesses are not forthcoming that the technique of composition in epic was improvisational. How did scholars versed in the classical tradition subscribe to a theory without evidence? The answer has probably to do with the history of the Homeric Question, which had driven commentators to even greater excesses in respect of the integrity of ancient texts, and to which Parry must have seemed a wholesome alternative; and with the growth by analogy, outside its proper domain in linguistics, of structuralist theory. Questions of authorship and tradition are in no sense eliminated by a choral paradigm, but they must be recast; there can no longer be an easy and presumptive leap into the traditional. What is a musical text? Who is its author? Who is its performer? Who is its listener? Who is its reader? How is music transmitted from generation to generation?

These are perennial critical questions from inside a living tradition of performance, a situation we are familiar with in relation to the works of Shakespeare or Mozart. Our situation with regard to Homer, by contrast, might at first sight seem desperate; how can we ever recover such a living tradition, even at the remove of the rhapsodes—still less pursue a critical inquiry? It is thankfully a quality of the greatest musical texts that they can teach their own actors and performers, if they are allowed to. Homer's music is now recoverable from his text, as surely (and as unsurely) as Shakespeare's or Mozart's. If we can never be completely confident in a particular realization, we can at least be confident at the level of our mediate techniques, in metrical and prosodic analysis, that they disclose a genuine rhythm and harmony. We can begin to say, 'I know you, what you were.'

In some kinds of purportedly traditionalist readings, the choral analysis is a positive support. Richard Sacks argues, for example, that the use of ἱπποδάμοιο as an epithet of Hector in the last line of the

Iliad, rather than the metrically equivalent ἀνδροφόνοιο, involves a necessary allusion to the presence of Apollo, although the god is not mentioned, because earlier deployments of the horse-breaker epithet all seem to occur in a context where Apollo is present.[37] 'It is Apollo who has preserved Hector's body in death,' says Sacks, 'just as he often accompanied him in life.'[38] He suggests that the allusion to Apollo at a funeral would complete the ring of the *Iliad*, which begins explicitly with Apollo's agency and the deaths of the Achaeans at the hands of the plague. To take this allusion, one need not appeal to traditional associations occurring in some traditional mentality. The musical text has its own concrete constraints. If Homer is going to sing Hector the breaker of horses, but not Hector the man-slayer, in close aural proximity to the name of Apollo, whether he likes it or not he has established an evocative connection in his audience, so that he cannot then sing the horse-breaker alone without awakening the musical association. The allusion to Apollo has a palpable reality because we are dealing with the almost tactile power of musical memory. Of course, one need not agree with Sacks's interpretation of this evocation. A partial melody might just as well highlight the absence of the missing parts, as the presence.

It is altogether a strange evocation. Hector has been cremated and buried: Sacks seems to forget that there is in fact no body left, to preserve or even to see. Homer has already stretched his expression to extremes to capture the condition of Hector in death. On the day that he died, when he and Achilles danced their nightmare ring around Ilium, it was not just Apollo that left him, but the day itself, the fateful day that went off to Hades with the tipping of the heavenly scales (*Il.* 22.209–13). I do not understand what Homer could have meant by this strange saying—what it means for a day to leave you—but it is certainly effective in conjuring Hector's unspeakable solitude: isolated from his family and city, bereft of god's help, deserted by the very day, he is left to stare alone upon the armed face of death. Between the knowledge of his doom and the moment of death, Hector is as alone as ever any mortal man; but he is also on the verge of another realm, and he gains a prophetic sight of this one

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[37] Sacks, *The Traditional Phrase in Homer*, 220 ff.
[38] Ibid. 224.

(22.356–60). Now, after being recovered by his father from the horrors of Achilles' clutches and restored to the city, after the antiphonal dirges of the women who loved him, after the funeral pyre and the burial, what has he become? What being is brought to consciousness by the name and the epithet, assembled out of memory and bone? Has he a poetic identity, a poetic reality in word and song, beyond his body's dissolution? This can only be disputed as a matter of taste, but I do not feel god's presence in the last line of the *Iliad*; I feel only the presence of Hector, tamer of horses.

Now is the time, it is not too late. Transported by the analysis of rhythm and harmony, even Homer's readers can hope to find themselves within the perimeter of the round. Let us also allow the poet back into the ring. He has been missing too long his customary place at the centre: this used to be his place of inspiration. Ringed by the Muses, he had usurped the place of Apollo Mousagetes at the seat of power—perhaps he was the god's ritual surrogate[39]—capable without divine aid of crafting and exploiting a choral signifier to protect and to invest the presence of Hector with immortality.

[39] See Gregory Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, 33, 305–6.

6

Retrogression, Episode, and Anagogy: The Round Dance and Narrative Form

Let us now consider the impact on the higher levels of Homeric art and thought of an origin in the dance of the Muses. It should be apparent at this point that to compose a line of epic verse is not in fact to compose a linear thing at all. Neither is Homer's period a circle; it corresponds rather to a section of a physical curve that, somewhere just after half-way in its motion, doubles back on itself, hesitates, and resumes. There are no metrical 'building blocks' yet invented for the nursery that can construct such a coiled motion. The loop of retrogression between caesura and diaeresis builds an interiority into the ἔπος. The words set off, but must turn back a step or two, retrace their retrogression, and start again with a jump to the end. The fact and form of retrogression confronts the poet in every line he attempts—that is, in his every attempt at a *line.* As we have noted, the alternative of accenting the fifth thesis, rather than composing a diaeresis, may have helped to create the sense of a whole line, by making a balancing unit out of the second half (post-caesura). But the caesura–diaeresis verse is the archetype, insofar as it corresponds to the retrogression and resumption of the dance. If such a motion so informs the composition at the level of the ἔπος, we should also see if it informs the larger Homeric narrative with its rings, its involutions, its chiastic retrogression.

A. 'THE INTELLECTUALIZATION OF A CORPOREALLY BOUND RHYTHM'

On the relation between dance and verse in epic, Georgiades makes the following observations:

Tracing the hexameter to the rhythm of the *kalamatianós* poses the question as to what extent the epos was originally related to dance. This rhythm comes to us today as the rhythm of the round dance, designated as such by the ancients and used for the performance of the Homeric epos. It is indeed possible that the original manner of performance was conceived in relation to the dance, and that it persisted as a popular practice alongside merely recited performances adopted in later centuries. (A remnant of this would be the modern Greek *syrtós kalamatianós.*) Thus we can imagine the dancing of the Phaeaces to the chant of Demodokos in the *Odyssey*, 8th song, in epic hexameter. It would mean that it was possible to sing the epos and at the same time to dance it. At all events, even if the Homeric epos itself was no longer danced, it is clear from what has been discussed that its rhythm, and therewith its connection with the human being in his entirety, originated from the round dance. The one direction of development, the intellectualization of a corporeally bound rhythm into a purely musical or merely recited rhythm of presentation, is a plausible process which is confirmed historically, whereas the reverse procedure is scarcely conceivable. Thus we find in the very beginning of Greek 'poetry'—that is, *musike*—in the time of Homer, and quite possibly even earlier, the impressive unity of music, verse and dance.[1]

The remarkable fact is that the process of intellectualization, if that is what it should be called, had already progressed a stage in the world of Demodocus as Homer depicts it. The blind bard of Phaeacia sings in solo recital accompanying himself on the lyre ($\phi\acute{o}\rho\mu\iota\gamma\xi$), as he entertains Alcinous' lunch guests with the story of the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles. (Homer appears to compose a proemium to this tale at *Odyssey* 8.75–82.) It is only when Alcinous wants to impress his mysterious guest with the skill of the Phaeacians' dancing, after they have embarrassed him somewhat with their showing against Odysseus in athletics, that the community puts on

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[1] Georgiades, *Greek Music, Verse and Dance*, 140–2.

the full, epic display: the nine appointed officials smooth out the dancing space, Demodocus proceeds to the centre, and a number of young bachelors, male Muses' surrogates, in their first maturity and practised at the steps, circle him and beat the divine dance ground with their feet (8.258–64). Two modes of performance are also depicted at the opening of the story in Ithaca: when they finish their dinner, the suitors turn to dancing and song, the crowning delights (ἀναθήματα) of a feast, and Phemius is their accompanist (1.150–5); whereas later, when the disguised Athena has left and Telemachus rejoins the company, the suitors sit and listen in silence to the singing of the bard (1.325–6).

Homer appears to be fascinated by the representation of his medium within his work. Perhaps there is a sense in the artist, as he reveals his canvas, of transcendence over his competitors and predecessors, or over the limits of the medium ('O for a muse of fire!'). In the episode in Phaeacia, Homer looks back over the development of his medium, the process which Georgiades calls 'the intellectualization of a corporeally bound rhythm'. This rhythm begins in the tread of the citizens in their community's traditional round dance. In this communal, participatory expression, the role of the lyric bard is that of an accompanist. If the situation in Phaeacia is strictly paradigmatic, then perhaps the songs that told directly about the movements of the gods, such as Demodocus' story about the adultery of Ares and Aphrodite, were always reserved for communal expression in the civic round. Of a different order are the songs about the exploits of men (κλέα ἀνδρῶν), such as Phemius' song in *Odyssey* 1 about the heroes' returns from Troy, or Demodocus' song about the heroes' quarrel, or the songs Achilles is singing to Patroclus in *Iliad* 9—accompanying himself on the silver-bridged lyre which he had stolen from amongst the ruin of the city of Eëtion, Andromache's city. Here is a first stage in the abstraction of the epic rhythm from dance, as the medium for a virtuoso's expression. The bard and his lyre are listened to in seated silence.

There is a further stage depicted in Phaeacia that represents a significant expansion of the expressive possibilities of the rhythmic medium. This stage is exemplified by what came to be known as the 'Tale of Alcinous', told over four books of the *Odyssey* by Odysseus. Homer here takes on the persona of the hero, who tells his own story

and articulates his own κλέος ('glory'). Odysseus seems to mark this transition at the beginning of Book 9, when he observes what a wonderful thing it is to listen to a singer such as Demodocus, his voice like unto the gods', with a full feast hard by; but the θυμός ('desire') of Alcinous has bid Odysseus intrude on this festal reverie, to recount to his own sorrow the tale of his sufferings. The story is a spoken narrative: Odysseus is not accompanied on the lyre. There is a sense in which the epic rhythm has come into its own as the rhythm of poetry. But to the extent that the caesurae and diaereses in this poetic rhythm still frame noun-and-epithet phrases, rather than become abstract constraints on *mere* word division, this poetry was still suffused with the evocative power of dance. The fact that Bach may have sat alone at a harpsichord did not prevent dancers' feet from animating both his fingers and his sentences.

The presentation of the history of epic rhythm in Phaeacia seems to have an intrinsic interest for Homer; he has the eye of an anthropologist, or a cultural historian. In the tale of the gods, we see the artist in his social function, as a kind of religious medium, the musician at the centre of the civic round. In the songs of the heroes, we see the artist as a virtuoso performer, himself an object of attention. In the Tale of Alcinous, we see something like the artist as hero, making a work of art out of his own story. Those who draw inspiration from typologies like 'the development of the artist as individual in the history of western society', or 'the emergence of the self as hero, in its social context', should find a rich paradigm here, and a possible compatriot in Homer.

It should be noted, however, that the artist as an object of representation yields in Homer to the artist as a medium. Even in the case of Odysseus in Phaeacia, no sooner does he emerge from the epic narrative into a vivid, histrionic presence, than he submerges again as a storyteller passive to his unfolding story, so that at times during the long tale one can find oneself forgetting and then being reminded that indeed, it is Odysseus himself who is speaking. The face of the storyteller vanishes as one enters into the world and the events of the myth. This disappearance of the storyteller behind the mask of the story, as it begins to entrance and to captivate with its own transporting power, is a feature common to all the stages of the development of epic depicted by Homer. The use of recurrent and recurrently evocative phrases

tends to create a foreground of summoned realities that impress with their independence, and lie *between* the teller and the receiver ('narratee') in common. But there is a heightening of complexity and resonance in the Tale of Alcinous, in part precisely because of the psychological dimension introduced by the union of the hero and the storyteller. The story as an expression and expansion of the self, and the self-containment of the artistic project, which can be seen to be reflected in this union, are all to the taste of the modern artist; but Homer and the nature of his verse allow that his surrogate artist-hero recede into the background, so that the tale of the wandering hero moves again under its own power, susceptible of interpretation and disclosive of meaning directly on the literal and the allegorical level. This is not to say that there is no psychological or self-reflective sense to these levels of meaning. But the story is not a mirror held up to the teller, it does not depend entirely on the artist for its life; it has an independent power and substance, and can be told a number of ways.

When Odysseus finally tells his story to Penelope, Homer lists the essential details of the long tale in a space of barely thirty lines (23.310 ff.). What we have here is, as it were, the raw material of Homeric epic: the essential catalogue of received myth, rendered into a sequence of dactylic hexameter lines, each of which can serve rhythmically and semantically as a springboard for expansions, perhaps as the beginning of a narrative ring which finally loops back to its place before proceeding to the next event in the sequence. The epic minstrel or storyteller must 'work up' this material into a tale, selecting and expanding on the illuminating detail in a variety of stock and innovative ways. The depicting of the crafting or in-forming of raw material is a constant theme of the *Odyssey*. It might therefore be a feature of Homer's design to expose the process of his own craft as well. The Tale of Alcinous would thus represent a finished version, but alas we are not privy to the version worked up for Penelope on the famously crafted marriage bed. What sort of story would do for *her*? The pathos of our exclusion, which drips from every line of the skeletal tale—but is softened somewhat by our knowledge of the sort of story Odysseus *could* tell with this same material—may well be the achieved intention.

At the end of the storytelling in Phaeacia Odysseus refers to his activity with the verb μυθολογεύειν (12.450, 453). Odysseus may well

mean simply 'telling stories' by it, but the word has come to have a long history. Perhaps Homer coins it with reference to the totality of his achievement in the Tale of Alcinous, which is a miniature of his achievement in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: a gathering, a reckoning, an accounting of the human and the divine, the cosmic and the natural reality through the medium of revelatory myth. So much and no less can fairly be said about the aspiration and the achievement of epic craft in Homer, where an inheritance in story bound up with a mesmerizing rhythm becomes a work of art revelatory both in performance and in meaning—μῦθος in a sense synchronic with Homer, a sense we shall seek to develop—which in turn came to serve historically as the matrix of an inquiry into the dialectic of 'myth' and reason and craft. Perhaps the whole progress of a Greek culture to come—Homer's legacy—can in a sense be seen as the intellectualization of a corporeally bound rhythm?

B. RHAPSODY AND THE EPISODIC WHOLE

In classical times, the Tale of Alcinous was proverbial for a long story; its very length might imply that Homer depended on a form of written recording. The use of a written record in composition does not, of course, imply that the *Odyssey* is a work of literature, any more than it implies that a Beethoven symphony is a work of literature. Odysseus' story, and both Homer's epics, bear all the hallmarks of roundel composition. The three manifestations of epic rhythm in Phaeacia, in dance, solo song, and narrative, seem to stress a continuity as well as a development. The fourth stage in this rhythm's history, however, where the hexameter is merely a stylized rhythm of language, without ring composition and recurrent phrases, belongs to post-Homeric art: it is a literate stage. I speculate on Homer's use of a written notation, as others have, only to account for the sheer scale of Odysseus' story, legendary in Plato's time, not to say the even greater scale of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. Compare G. S. Kirk's account of the development of the gigantic pottery of the geometric age (eighth century BCE), possibly contemporary with Homer and with the introduction of Phoenician letters into Greece:

The evidence of archaeology does not suggest that pots became systematically larger and larger until eventually one was made that was seven feet tall, but rather that there was a leap from the largeish pot to the perfectly colossal one, a leap which must have been made for the first time by a particular potter who suddenly had a flash of ambition and the inspiration of sheer size, and at the same time realized that he possessed the necessary materials and technique.[2]

Ambition and inspiration are of course the forming energies, but they are harnessed to technique. The use of a written notation was at least as necessary, materially and technically, for a development of the scale of Homeric epic out of roundel song, as it was for the development, from similar origins, of the modern symphony.

Nagy asserts that '[t]o say that "Homer wrote" is the ultimate risk'.[3] He argues that the written text of Homer has evolved in tandem with a living performance tradition. He delineates five stages in the evolution of Homer, with parallel developments in performance and text.[4] The first two stages are oral, while the last three are correlated with types of written production, suggestively styled as 'transcript', 'script', and 'scripture' respectively. A particular emphasis is placed by Nagy on ῥαψῳδία, 'song-stitching', and the ῥαψῳδός, the rhapsode or 'song-stitcher', as elements which define the third and middle stage of the hypothesized development, and which are therefore claimed to be crucially formative in the production of all written versions of Homer. Homer himself becomes conceptualized as a culture hero, retrojected by the rhapsode in the vitality of his performance, as an authoritative foundation in whom the performer participates by μίμησις.

A positive aesthetic is claimed for the art of ῥαψῳδία:

In the esthetics of sewing, as conveyed by the verb *rhápto*, one's attention centers on the totality of the *Gestalt* that has been sewn together, not on the constituent parts. For an attention-getting example, we may consider the following description of a type of fashionably tailored *khitón* worn by the young women of Sparta to show off their beauty: τῷ γὰρ ὄντι τοῦ

[2] G. S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962, 281.

[3] Nagy, *Homeric Questions*, 21.

[4] Nagy, *Poetry as Performance, 110.*

παρθενικοῦ χιτῶνος αἱ πτέρυγες οὐκ ἦσαν συνερραμμέναι κάτωθεν, ἀλλ'
ἀνεπτύσσοντο καὶ συνανεγύμνουν ὅλον ἐν τῷ βαδίζειν τὸν μηρόν 'for in fact
the flaps of the *khitón* worn by their young women were not <u>sewn together</u>
[*rhápto*] at the lower ends, and so they would fly back and bare the whole
thigh as they walked' (Plutarch *Comparison of Lycurgus and Numa* 3.4). Just
exactly where you sew together—and where you leave off sewing together—
becomes an exquisite art of tailoring to suit the senses and the sensibilities of
the viewer.[5]

The problem with this *Gestalt* of the tailored beauty is that the word
ῥάπτειν and the compounds of its root have almost exclusively
negative connotations in Homer, both in a moral and an aesthetic
sense. In general, to 'stitch' in Homer is to plot or to contrive, with
the object being mischief. We have golden stitches in Sarpedon's
shield (χρυσείῃς ῥάβδοισι, *Il.* 12.297), but the emphasis here is not
on the beauty of the patchwork, but on the quality of the thread.
Most striking is the description of shabby Laertes in his garden: his
shirt is ῥαπτὸν ἀεικέλιον, *Od.* 24.228, where 'ugly' or 'unseemly'
seems to elaborate what is implied by 'stitched'. The word ῥαψῳδία
for Homer, if he had thought to coin or to use it, would have referred
either to 'evil-' or 'contrived song', on the one hand, or simply to
'patched' song on the other.

   This suggests that the concept of rhapsody is not synchronic with
Homer, and that the development of its positive aesthetic is late in
relation to the world of the text. (The notion of a staff-bearing reciter,
as opposed to a strumming bard, was likely *not* unfamiliar to Homer,
but such a reciter only became a 'rhapsode' when he presumed to cut
and paste from Homer himself.) The art of sewing depends upon the
existence of whole cloth already woven. In the modern concert hall, it
was once the standard practice to excerpt movements from different
pieces and composers, so as to 'compose' an evening of variety, taste,
and harmony. This is precisely the art of 'stitching song'. More recent
audiences of 'classical' music, like those of Peisistratean Athens
in relation to Homer, have demanded whole compositions in
their original sequence. Consider that such a demand begins in the

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[5] Ibid. 68–9.

audience, and bespeaks either an intimacy with the original whole as a whole, or, at the very least, the knowledge that such a whole exists.

In the modern case, the rhapsodic art of the concert programme depends upon the presence of written originals as known quanta, and I must say I feel little risk in presuming the presence of written originals at the time of Peisistratus. From the ancient world, one might compare the Liturgy of the Word as it has come to be practised in Christian mass. If Nagy is right about the contemporaneous practices of rhapsodes and Homerists at public festivals, the Liturgy of the Word, with its inspired juxtapositions of passages from the Old Testament, the psalms, the epistles and the gospels, may well represent the survival from ancient times into ours of ῥαψῳδία tailored for a feast day. Needless to say, the art and the pedagogy of such a cutting and sequencing depend upon a scripture already known and apprehended (whether truly or falsely) as a unitary whole.

In contrast with the sophisticated patchwork montage that Nagy would have us see, tailored for the day, the works of art represented within the *Odyssey* itself bespeak an aesthetic of construction, wholeness, unity, form, and function. Three wondrous artifacts buttress the story: Penelope's web, Odysseus' raft, and the couple's marriage bed of denatured olive. All three depend upon a frame: all three must therefore be conceived at some level as wholes before they are executed. All three involve transformations of various kinds—from vertical to horizontal (web to shroud, trees to planks, trunk to bed); from raw material to finished, humanly purposive artifact. All three are unadorned: they are each perfect marriages of form and function. Nagy would infer from an etymology of 'Homer' that it is a type name for a joiner, much as a rhapsode is a stitcher; he proposes a parallelism between the 'concepts' of *Hómeros* and *rhapsoidós*.[6] But a joiner who worked his wood without a view to the dimensions and the purposes of the cart, would never make a wheel of any use.

By contrast again, the art works represented in the *Iliad* point to a different aesthetic. Two exemplars come to mind. Helen's web (3.125–8) is a Bayeux Tapestry; episodes of the struggle beween the Achaeans and the Trojans on her account appear to be embroidered

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(ἐμπάσσειν) upon a web already woven. In the case of the great shield as well, the artwork is an adornment, superadded upon a highly functional implement. One is made to feel this rather vividly when the shield is penetrated by Aeneas' spear. A nightmare for the art crowd. In the distinction between art as a perfect marriage of form and purpose, and art as an adornment superadded, gracing the necessary and the useful, and perhaps also transforming them, I believe we have as real a distinction as can be made between the aesthetic sensibilities of the poet of the *Odyssey* and the poet of the *Iliad*. Achilles' lyre is extravagantly silver-bridged; Demodocus' lyre is merely—and resonantly—hollow.

One wonders about a reaction in the later poem to the earlier. Aristotle particularly praises the *Odyssey* for the narrative unity displayed in its choice of episodes (*Poetics* 1451ª24 ff., though, to be sure, he nods to the *Iliad* here as well). Perhaps the later or older poet is offended by a certain superfluity in some of the episodes of the *Iliad*. The art objects mentioned in the *Odyssey* are all tightly integrated into the plot. But the scene of Helen's weaving in the *Iliad* is itself an adornment. Even the passage describing the pictures on the shield, sublime as it may be, does little to advance the story, and can only be justified on these terms as an interlude. A larger criticism suggests itself: perhaps there is an exaggeration or glorification of things in the *Iliad* which the *Odyssey* insists on bringing to earth, and seeing them for what they are. The land of Ithaca, after all, is no good for horses (let alone talking ones).

There is perhaps a way in which the plot of the *Iliad*, taken as a whole, can be understood as a 'stitched-in' affair. The father of gods and men spends a sleepless night at the beginning of Book 2, trying to figure out how he can do the will of Thetis—her ἐξαίσιον ἀρὴν, a prayer *outside* of fate (15.598).[7] The problem involves stitching in a sequence (or perhaps a 'loop') of events inside a grander schema that has already been determined. This amounts to a problem of historical—for Zeus—and hence narrative—for Homer—retrogression. Ilium is bound to fall; but for a time the Achaeans must suffer, ten thousand griefs, because of Achilles' vengeful wrath. The tide of

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[7] See Laura Slatkin, *The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the* Iliad, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, 104–5.

battle flows backwards from its goal and then forwards, from Ilium back toward the ships and then forward again. (Zeus himself refers to this motion schematically with the term $\pi\alpha\lambda\acute{\iota}\omega\xi\iota\varsigma$, 'reverse pursuit', 15.69.) One does not end up precisely where one started, however, because time never stops or reverses, and the deaths that occur within this 'loop' are pivotal and real. In Book 8 we learn from Zeus— perhaps he learns it then too—that Patroclus is to die. In Book 15, once he has awoken from the slumbers of spent love, Zeus reveals for the first time that Hector also must die, and so the story's horizon comes into view.

What is it to look upon such a tapestry as the *Iliad*? How does one find one's way about the picture? There are many episodes, many images: unity is explicit in the frame, derived from the unity of web and shield, but the images are not made of the material of the shield or the web, they are transcendent stuff. They point to themselves, drawing one's scanning attention, and point beyond the frame. As it happens, Helen's web frames a world at war, and Achilles' shield a vision of life in time of peace (including its dimension of local conflict). These ironies indicate that there is nothing in the nature of web or shield that they could not frame other subjects. The relation of the episodes to the whole must therefore be contrasted with that of episodes in a serialized novel, which seem continually to advance an authorial superstructure. There is a linear narrative in the *Iliad*, to be sure, but the web and the shield admonish us to view the thing as in some fashion a three-dimensional whole, static even as the pictures seem to move. Upon a second and successive encounters, the linear qualities recede; every verse becomes a repeated verse, a melody; and the episodes emerge in bas relief upon the frame: Achilles and Priam, the death of Hector, Patroclus fallen, Glaucus and Sarpedon, the embassy, Hector and Andromache, Agamemnon and Achilles. Such scenes are spiralling designs, rings that define their own centres and vanishing points. They need not be viewed, there-fore, only in their original succession and juxtaposition. Yet we must also reject the *Gestalt* of the sewn garment: it is the individual elements that draw one to themselves, not patches but microcosms. Together they create a labyrinth.

The *Iliad* is like the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, filled with separate images that are entry-points into its mysteries. There is a

literal sense to the description of Homeric narrative structure in terms of episodes that form conjoined and/or concentric rings, if one follows the charts of this phenomenon produced by Cedric Whitman in his *Homer and the Heroic Tradition.* But to my perception the *Iliad* lacks Michelangelo's grand central image of the outstretched hands of God and man: it is Notre Dame without the altar. To be sure, the relation between divinity and humanity is somehow central to the *Iliad.* But there seems to be no obvious narrative centre to the labyrinth: there are only the episodes. The only way into the picture, into the mysterious conjunction of divine and human, is therefore *through* the separate episodes.

C. *Μυθολογεύειν*

We have returned to our Homeric question. It shall lead us to a poetics of the episode. To put it succinctly and reductively: how does a narrative arise out of a catalogue? (But then Hesiodic narrative is different from Homeric; and Iliadic from Odyssean.) We have already noted the apparent influence of retrogression in the dance of the Muses upon Platonic dramaturgy (surely an example of a yet further stage of 'the intellectualization of a corporeally bound rhythm'). We shall also come to see it upon Homeric narrative.

Μῦθος in Homer is not yet myth, but the essential dynamism of myth in concealment and revelation is, to begin with, the dynamism inherent in the word's Homeric usage. *μυθήσομαι οὐδ' ἐπικεύσω* (*Od.* 19.269, 23.265), 'I shall declare it and not cover it up', is a compressed example of the Hebraic construction ubiquitous in Homer, the parallel elements usually flanking the caesura (e.g. 'when they were assembled, and when they became one in assembly', *οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν ἤγερθεν, ὁμηγερέες τ' ἐγένοντο, Il.* 1.57). The phrase *οὐδ' ἐπικεύσω*, 'I shall not cover up', which always occurs after the bucolic diaeresis, is a useful semantic indicator because of its economy of use and clarity of meaning. Homer pairs it with the following antecedents in the line: *προφρονέως ἐρέω ἔπος* ('Well-intendedly I shall say an *epos*', *Il.* 5.816), *νεικέσω, εἴ περ μοι νεμεσήσεαι* ('I shall quarrel, even if you will be indignant with me', *Il.* 10.115), *τῶν οὐδέν*

τοι ἐγὼ κρύψω ἔπος ('Of these no *epos* shall I hide from you', *Od.* 4.350, 17.141), πρόφρων ὑποθήσομαι ('Well-intendedly shall I suggest', *Od.* 5.143), and μαντεύσομαι ('I shall prophesy', *Od.* 17.154). We also have μῦθον δέ τοι οὐκ ἐπικεύσω ('the *muthos* I shall not cover up from you' *Od.* 4.744), ἀνέκραγον, οὐκ ἐπικεύσω ('[since] I cried out, I shall not cover up', *Od.* 14.467), and εἰπέ μοι εἰρομένῳ νημερτέα μηδ' ἐπικεύσῃς ('Tell me, as I am asking, things that are certain, and do not cover up', *Od.* 15. 263). Note that the uses of the phrase with ἔπος and εἰπεῖν all require some kind of qualification of the term (προφρονέως, οὐδέν . . . κρύψω, νημερτέα) to effect a semantic pairing, while the uses with μυθήσομαι and the words which involve obvious declarations and revelations (νεικέσω, μαντεύσομαι, ἀνέκραγον) do not. The notion of 'disclosure' seems therefore to be integral to the sense of μυθήσομαι, integral to μῦθος but not to ἔπος without qualification. After love-making Odysseus and Penelope upon the bed are said to delight in μῦθοι, which may broadly be understood to be revelations of concealed things.

When Odysseus tells the skeletal tale, the word to describe his recounting is καταλέγειν. The object of this verb is properly a quantity (as also in Penelope's story to him): ὅσα, πολλὰ, and πάντα, how many and so very much and many the spent livestock and drawn wine, the woes imposed on men and woes suffered. καταλέξαι ἅπαντα is to recount exhaustively. Such re-counting can be understood as the first remove from the catalogue as processional evocation to the catalogue as narrative, where the narrative is conceived as a *sum of discrete elements*. There is no immediate scope in such a narrative born from a catalogue for what we recognize as the organism of a plot. Beginning, middle, and end have no special significance attached to them; nor is there climax and denouement; the final element in Odysseus' tale to Penelope—or *Zahl*, as German remembers—his Phaeacian transport—is simply the last line of the count, what Homer calls the δεύτατον ἔπος (*Od.* 23.342).

Odysseus' skeletal tale may be well contrasted with Aristotle's synopsis, what he calls the λόγος of the *Odyssey*: 'a certain man being out of the country for many years, being carefully watched by Poseidon, and he being all alone . . .' (*Poetics* 1455[b]17–23). Aristotle gives a concise summary of a plot which climaxes in salvation and destruction. This sort of 'sum', a λόγος, is what he says is peculiar

(ἴδιον) to the *Odyssey*; the remaining materials are ἐπεισόδια. On this reading the entirety of the tale of wanderings, whether told to Alcinous or to Penelope, even the very name of Odysseus, belongs to what is episodic and not intrinsic. There is surely a distortion here; but it is equally sure that the *Odyssey* as a whole has an arrangement which can prompt a reader like Aristotle to formulate a λόγος. This is not at all the case with the skeletal tale, nor even immediately or straightforwardly with the four books of the Tale of Alcinous. How does a tally become a tale? We must set aside Aristotle's rationalist notion of the episodic (what is extraneous to the λόγος) and seek out a poetics of the episode, to develop a sense for the episode as a way of making.

About the semantic opposition of μῦθος and ἔπος: it is not helpful to say in the Prague School fashion that the two words for 'word' are to be distinguished inside Homer as 'marked' and 'unmarked', respectively.[8] The distinction applied here is a formal one, originally induced in the context of phonological phenomena—not without controversy[9]—and is only by analogy applied to semantic interpretation. Such a relationship could only be gleaned with confidence from native informants in any case. Our 'semantic indicator', οὐδ' ἐπικεύσω, suggests that a qualified 'epos' phrase could be equivalent to a simple 'muthos' phrase. When the marked–unmarked distinction *is* applied in semantics, it tends to be in the context of antonymic pairs.[10] To judge from usage, there is merely a semantic *difference* between ἔπος and μῦθος and they cover different ranges. Aristotle refers to an ἔπος, meaning an epic line, as δεκαεπτά, a thing to be 'stepped' (βαίνειν) in seventeen parts, where the element is a syllable. Series of ἔπεα can be tallied, as in the 'last' ἔπος mentioned above. An ἔπος is therefore *numerable*, internally as to its metricality, externally as an element in a catalogue. Most generally, ἔπος is a speech act viewed in all its qualities, such as its syllables and its metricality, that do not touch on its meaning. Hence words are characteristically winged, not specially so; they are all and equally

[8] Gregory Nagy, foreword to Martin, *The Language of Heroes*, p. x.

[9] See Roger Lass, *Phonology: An Introduction to Basic Concepts*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984, 45 and 132–4.

[10] F. R. Palmer, *Semantics: A New Outline*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976, 80.

substances that direct themselves through air. μῦθος by contrast is speech in its particularized intention and meaning; more than this, it is meaning transmitted: μῦθος is meaning *performed*—in all its ambiguity and deception, as well as clarity. An ἔπος is a quantum that can be danced and otherwise numbered; a μῦθος is a revelation meant to be understood (or misunderstood!). The emphasis on particular performance in the latter allows us to draw a further contrast diachronically with the un-Homeric λόγος of Aristotle, a formulation in thought that may entail no *particular* speech act at all (it may be translated into English, for example.)

One thing is clear: it is not the shape of events in the *Odyssey* itself that is responsible for Aristotle's and other readers' responses, as though they had encountered an organic being. Roughly we have a Telemachy, Phaeacian things, Eumaean things, and a Homecoming. The first and third of these four parts are routinely criticized by novices and seasoned readers alike for being too lengthy, too boring, and frustrating of momentum. One does not look for a poetics of the *Odyssey*, therefore, in an art of sequencing in the tally—at least on the largest scale. Such an art is very proper to a serial or comic or detective novelist. It is too much to say that Homer was a failure at this art, or even to suggest that he had not thought about it sufficiently. Homer's scene-switching as threads of stories dovetail, occasionally in mid-line (e.g. *Od.* 17.182), is far from amateur, even for those of us raised on movies and teledrama. The poet of the Homecoming books, in particular, is a very skilled plotter indeed. But it is not Homer's plotting strategy that causes such an overwhelming sense of organism in his readers.

The linking words (ἤ οἵη) in a Hesiodic catalogue made such an impression as to give their name to a body of work, the *Eoiae*. In Odysseus' skeletal tale the linking words between the episodes, the joints in the tally, are most often ἠδ᾽ ὡς, 'and so' or 'even so'. Their repetition in these lines begins to sound like a chant or refrain. Such a link in Greek either connects consecutively to form a chain of clauses, or connects, as it were, in parallel, where the adjoining clauses are flanked in some point of comparison. The modalities of ὡς in Greek allow it to serve as a simple conjunction or as a springboard to a comparison or even a simile. καὶ also can have a sense of either 'and' or 'even', and several similar or identical sounding 'eta' words can be

either conjunctions or disjunctions. Such multivalence in conjunctions may well have assisted epic cataloguers and nascent storytellers in becoming makers of proportions and comparisons.

Clearly it is in the spaces between the links that one can look for development. The simplest and most obvious schema for this, typical of the Catalogue of Ships and Odysseus' account of the procession of souls in Hades, is afforded by the relative pronoun. A name carries with it a history; once the name has been announced in the fullness of epithets and epic rhythm, summoning the very presence of its referent to the space of performance, a relative pronoun in the following line ('she who' or 'they who') simply draws out, by way of reminder, an ancestry or nationality, or a telling of famous deeds. The *Gestalt* of such cataloguing has been well depicted by Roberto Calasso:

È hoíē: 'Or like she who …': such was the recurrent formula in the *Catalogue of Women*, for centuries attributed to Hesiod, and then lost. Thus, time after time, the story of another woman in the catalogue would begin. Thus was each new link in the chain of generations opened, as though, for the Greeks, the only form in which the heroic past, from beginning to end, might be recorded was not that of a genealogy of kings but this linking together of scores of girls and their stories in monotonous and stupefying succession. In the end, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* recounted only a few days and a few years of the story, the last throes of the heroic age. While the age as a whole could only be told as a sequence of women's tales, as though turning page after page of a family album. For those learned genealogists whose supreme ambition it was to map out the tree of time through all its branches, the only frame that could contain the age of the heroes was there in those two words: *È hoíē*, 'Or like she who …'.[11]

A simile also is an immediate 'drawing out' from a grammatical link. In relation to the ongoing narrative, it is self-contained: the equipoise in its proportional arrangement makes it a circle-like insertion. A simile interrupts the chain and briefly illuminates, but then returns one, or keeps one, at the place it appears in the story—ready for the next link and a new line. In this way 'suspensions' are created within an ongoing movement.

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[11] Roberto Calasso, *The Marriage of Cadmus and Harmony*, tr. Tim Parks, New York: Vintage, 1993, 356.

At all events, there must be some sort of closure in these spaces between links that turn into episodic narratives. They are always in between things and must circumscribe themselves to yield to the consequence of the largest schema, the sequence of people or events, the apoetic catalogue. There is therefore a pressure upon a more developed narrative to circle, and this is richly observed in the contentious scholarship on ring composition. What are digressions in other styles of narrative are 'retrogressions' in epic. The episode which frames and centralizes the significant naming of Odysseus—where, by contrast, a history earns a name—inserted while Odysseus' foot is in mid-air and about to upset Eurycleia's washing bowl—is itself framed by corresponding (but not identical) lines (*Od.* 19.394, 466) that refer to the destination of Parnassus (which we learn in between to have been a lair of the white-toothed boar) and to Autolycus and his sons. The motive for the particular repetition seems to be largely formal, merely to create a ring, an aural parenthesis: the lines mark the beginning and the end of a retrogression.

What is possible here in these 'in between' spaces is $\mu\hat{u}\theta o\varsigma$: not in Aristotle's sense, not an arrangement in the sequence of events that must be translated 'plot'; nor in his other sense of the 'received' stories ($\tau\hat{\omega}\nu\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\delta\epsilon\delta o\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omega\nu\ \mu\acute{u}\theta\omega\nu$, 1451^{b}24); but $\mu\hat{u}\theta o\varsigma$ in an original sense of development and revelation, a concentrating and an intensification. Even if we do not derive it from $\mu\acute{u}\omega$, with its profound equivocation between blindness and mystic vision—as Aristotle observes, 'visions appear even to those whose eyes are shut' ($\phi\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota\ \kappa\alpha\grave{\iota}\ \mu\acute{u}ou\sigma\iota\nu\ \acute{o}\rho\acute{a}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$, *De Anima* 428^{a}16)—a simple conspectus of usage in Homer allows us to infer a sense of 'disclosure'. The framework of the 'plot' recedes behind moments of intensity. The framework cannot disappear, it must be returned to, or else the order of the whole, not in this case a cosmos but a sum, would disappear. Yet such moments define centres and are the first propagants towards true cosmos in the Homeric narrative. Again, these occur not in the joints of the frame, but in moments in between that must be prepared for and receded from.

The similes arrest a contemplative moment. But the obvious examples of such $\mu\hat{u}\theta o\varsigma$, indeed the titular exemplars, are the speeches. Each is a disclosure of what is hidden behind the mask of name, face, and status. Most paradoxically, the narrator makes the

disclosure by putting on that very mask and expressing what is indwelling at the various loci of individuality in the human figure, as though he were in fact seated at the seats of such a person's consciousness. Homer is not far different from a dramaturge, in that a tragedy is formally a series of entrances, stands, dances, and exits of a chorus, but the moments that bring unity to the whole are moments in between of concentrated rhythmic eloquence in the actor of a great figure, who has lesser figures and lesser speeches for foil. The order of the speeches Homer gives his protagonists is an order of logic, syntax, and gesture, which serves a living awareness and an intention: for all that it is expressed in the speech style of the Muse ($\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\xi\iota\varsigma \; Mo\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\eta\varsigma$), it is furthest removed from the style of linkage, the arithmetical order, of a catalogue.

If the recipient is of a lower rank, the disclosure of will and intention is necessarily received as a command: where the speaker is in a higher position, his $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta o\varsigma$ effectually becomes an order ('who will rid me of this troublesome priest?'). It is not therefore accurate to say that 'command' is a separate 'meaning' for $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta o\varsigma$. In the $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta o\iota$ shared on the bed between Odysseus and Penelope, however, there is a mutuality and an intimacy. What is tantalizing at this point is that we ourselves do not receive these $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta o\iota$ from Homer, but only a catalogue. The distention in time the couple experiences in storytelling is something we experience only externally, like Athena, in the restraining of the steeds of the Dawn.

Richard P. Martin defines 'muthos' in Homer in the following way: 'a speech-act indicating authority, performed at length, usually in public, with a focus on full attention to every detail.'[12] The components here seem cobbled together. In particular, the stress on authority and publicity can make little sense of the interaction on Odysseus' and Penelope's marriage bed. (Martin himself notes another case of 'private' $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta o\iota$ between Nestor and Machaon, *Il.* 11. 642–3.)[13] A root notion of 'disclosure' seems to resolve his list, as well as to point to what is essential in Homer's usage.

We may appropriate $\mu\upsilon\theta o\lambda o\gamma\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\nu$, Odysseus' coinage, to describe the art that arises from $\mu\upsilon\theta\acute{\epsilon}\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ and $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$, the episodic art

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[12] Martin, *The Language of Heroes*, 12.
[13] Ibid. 39.

that draws out life and meaning in the midst of the tallied segments in a catalogue. Odysseus himself insists that the process should only happen once; it is hateful (ἐχθρόν) to him αὖτις ἀριζήλως εἰρημένα μυθολογεύειν (*Od.* 12.453) to 're-mythologize' what has already been spoken very clearly. It is not just the speaking that has been clear, but the things spoken of that have been made manifest: there has been a revelation both of teller and of story. When he says τί τοι τάδε μυθολογεύω; 'why should I *muthologeuein* these things?' (450), I read the object of the verb (τάδε) to refer not to the finished story, so that the verb would mean something equivalent to recounting, but rather to the raw materials, catalogue elements, upon which the activity denoted by the verb is focused. He has just repeated a line-and-a-half (7.254–5, 12.448–9) annunciatory of Ogygia and Calypso, which he had gone on to develop somewhat on the previous evening. To 'mythologize', that is, to develop, this material again, would be hateful to him. Perhaps the stricture against repetition—a delicate matter in many ways for Homer—here applies only to the temporal proximity of the previous rendition, and to the fact that it was made to the same audience (12.451–2). But perhaps what is hateful to Odysseus also motivates against any sort of first-person re-rendering of the wanderings upon the marriage bed in Book 23. Such a stricture against repeated μῦθος does not apply to Odysseus, who has a new audience, but to Homer himself, who yesterday (or perhaps several days ago) had given us the Tale of Alcinous. We come again attractively to a dovetailing of hero and poet in the long Tale— Homer must own the tale told by Odysseus in his own hidden name if he is to feel a stricture—and then again attractively to a separation of poet and hero in the sublimely self-conscious deployment of a catalogue upon the bed. And beyond this, we may motivate Homer's famous avoidance of any re-working or even mention in the *Odyssey* of any of the events that were once 'mythologized'—that is, developed and rendered—in the *Iliad*.

What we are to expect from the 'mythologic' art are moments of revelation that are moments of poetic intensity inside episodes that form a catalogic chain. The episodes succeed each other like the separate states in William James's stream of thought, autonomous 'pulses' with inner subjectivity and each with aspirations to contain the whole. The modern symphony is perhaps a tighter affair, but its

framework also is a chain, while its separate movements are circle-forms; and within these movements, elaborately prepared for with premonitions and repetitions, are moments of melodic and rhythmic intensity that arrest the imagination and afterwards transfix the memory. The genius of the memorable melody must be complemented by the equally great but quiet art of the coda. The most obvious exemplars of this phenomenon in Homer are the similes, such as that of stars and fires that closes *Iliad* 8, a moment of lyrical intensity that almost escapes the moorings of the story.

$M\upsilon\theta o\lambda o\gamma\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\nu$ belongs to the *Odyssey*, however, and there is indeed a peculiar inward sense to the music of the second work. Where similes in the *Iliad* are springboards from a link that seem to throw open the casements of the mind, and to propel one to the contemplation of a parallelism that is reality, similes in the *Odyssey* have a strange way of leaping forth only to turn in on themselves and draw the surrounding matter into their spiraling vortex. The beginning of Book 16 is a particularly pregnant moment where Telemachus walks into Eumaeus' steading, and the Telemachy dovetails with the locus of the swineherd. Odysseus is there as yet unseen, a mute witness from his seat of the greeting of his swineherd and his son. The simile compares Eumaeus' feeling to that of a father upon the return of his only son after an absence of ten years; he kisses Telemachus 'as though he had escaped from death' (16.21). The simile obviously embraces in its compass the mute witness, whose intensity of feeling at the sight of his son is pointed to by exquisite indirection. It is directly about Telemachus' relief. But it is most poignantly about Eumaeus. In the image he is both father and son, for we have just heard in the previous book about his abduction as a child and his landing in Ithaca, never to see his parents or his homeland again ($N\hat{\eta}\sigma\acute{o}\varsigma\ \tau\iota\varsigma\ \Sigma\upsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\eta\ \kappa\iota\kappa\lambda\acute{\eta}\sigma\kappa\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota,\ \epsilon\check{\iota}\ \pi o\upsilon\ \dot{\alpha}\kappa o\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, 15.403). In mourning and rejoicing over Telemachus, he mourns and perhaps even rejoices in his own story; he is his own Syrian father, welcoming himself home. Eumaeus is a man whose life has not been allowed to circle: imagine if the prodigal son had stayed and made good at the pigsty. Eumaeus' return is complete only in the equipoise of this simile. His arrow has landed and taken root in Ithaca, and his immigrant life must find its meaning and its homecoming in the orbit of Odysseus.

The quality of this simile is in fact typical of the *Odyssey*. The similes are cross-dressed, inverted, and profoundly bi- or trivalent.[14] They capture a moment by, as it were, turning within it. Homer's most famous achievements here are the simile that compares the tears of Odysseus in Phaeacia, upon hearing the story he had requested, of the horse and of his slaughter of Helen's new husband Deiphobus, to the tears of a woman widowed in war, with the spears prodding her in the back and shoulders as she shrieks over her fallen husband (8.521–31); and the simile that compares the welcomeness to Penelope of the returned Odysseus' embrace to the welcomeness of the shore to exhausted sailors shipwrecked and swimming out at sea (23.233–40). In one case Odysseus is crying the tears of his victims—not those he has killed but those he has ruined by his killing. (The fact that Odysseus' tears are in response to the story of his victory with Menelaos, however, backed by Athena over Deiphobus, may offer the slightest suggestion that we should not have an Andromache in mind in the simile, but Helen herself; in which case the simile involves us in another level of involution, and the tears, on either side of the simile, are crocodile tears.) In the case of the exhausted swimmer Penelope feels in her own breast the seminal feeling of her middle-aged Odysseus, a man who has challenged the sea and failed, but is also one of the rare survivors, who now longs only to find his feet upon the land, to make his return, his *νόστος*, to mother *Γῆ*. One wonders whether to live or to be buried. *Πατρὶς Γαῖα* is the mother earth of our fathers.

Most remarkable in the *Odyssey* are moments of 'lyric breakout' and 'phonic density' (to borrow from Paul Friedrich)[15] that are not speeches, but narrative *μῦθος*. One such is the description of Phorcys' cove at which Odysseus arrives in Ithaca, with its olive tree and its sacred cave of two doors (13.96–112). A favourite is the description of the twin bushes (or trees) at Odysseus' arrival in Scheria (5.476–93). Katherine Kretler[16] has written in detail about the astonishing density of the imagery: the olive and its significance;

[14] See Helene P. Foley, 'Reverse Similes and Sex Roles in the *Odyssey*', *Arethusa*, 2 (1978), 7–26.

[15] See Paul Friedrich, 'Lyric Epiphany', *Language in Society*, 30 (2001), 217–47.

[16] Katherine L. Kretler, 'Saving Self and Seed under the Olive: Odysseus' Sleep on Scheria, *Odyssey* 5.474–493'; unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago, 1995.

the twin trees and theirs; the mortality of fallen leaves, and the inviting space for two or three guests (including the 'reader', a 'metaguest'); the interweaving of the branches and their impenetrability; the suggestion at once of a comfortable womb where the doe hides her fawns, and the boar's lair from which Odysseus received his individuating scar; the hiding beneath the leaves (καλύψειν) and the still-living firebrand in the ashes. If Kretler is right, there is a remarkable amount of what makes the whole *Odyssey* tick that is condensed and rarefied in the breathtaking timing and expression of these lines. Odysseus' arrival up the river is a moment both of destiny and of prospect: he enters twin bushes high up upon a riverbank. It is as if here at the end of Book 5 the whole horizon of the *Odyssey* first comes into view. Something has been recognized: no wonder the hero rejoices at the sight (5.486).

There is an opportunism in this imagery, a kind of reaching for wholeness from within the interstices of a simple recounting. Not only Odysseus but Homer arrives in Phaeacia at a moment of protection and prospect, concealment and revelation. Indeed the notion of this Scheria being a place for the Tale seems to be Homer's discovery: the independent tale that I spoke of, capable of moving under its own power, has been 'located'. The entrance of Athena at the end of the image, to pour sweet sleep upon the eyes of Odysseus, is essentially and mysteriously—that is, revealingly—authorial. A consciousness peers out through the trees.

Friedrich has written on 'lyric epiphany' and discusses a number of notable forms to be found in Homer. In his section on 'phonic/lexical texturing' he analyses the lines that describe Penelope's tears as she listens to the disguised Odysseus' lies (19.203–10).[17] The lines are highly charged and musical on many levels—Friedrich does not, and does not even need to turn to rhythmic and harmonic analysis to convince one of this; he notes a remarkable confluence of guttural (dorsovelar) stops, beginning with unaspirated and aspirated forms (e.g. δάκρυα, τήκετο, χρώς, χιών, etc.), and culminating both semantically and phonically with voiced roots (γοόωσαν, γυναῖκα, πολυδακρύτοιο γόοιο). He speculates about a 'culturally specific onomatopoetic sound symbolism … mimetic of sobbing'; and observes:

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[17] Friedrich, 'Lyric Epiphany', 236–9.

Many levels and chords of sound and meaning thus collaborate, as they do in Romantic, Symbolist, and recent 'language' poetry, and even T'ang Chinese poetry, in a text that can stand as a lyric poem (although no translator so far has worked it this way). As a lyric poem, [the lines express] the sensitive and haunted woman of Homer's art. When such a lyric voice erupts—or whispers to us softly—from the epic continuum, it reflects a rotation or a pivoting, or better, a metamorphosis of the poet from being a bard telling ABOUT epic protagonists, to being the otherwise latently or underlyingly lyric poet who is now expressing himself or herself THROUGH the eyes or voice or gestures of one of the epic protagonists.[18]

There is a non-metaphorical meaning to 'rotation' and 'pivoting', both of which are in different ways characteristic of the dance of the Muses (the actual 'epic continuum'). It is therefore tempting to connect the sources of 'lyric breakout' and concentration in Homer's narrative to a rhythm that is not merely temporal, but also spatial in a specific and literally *con-centrating* sense. The fact that not all hexameter poetry, and not all of Homer, exhibits these passing involutions of lyric intensity, does not in the least argue against such a connection between the source rhythm and the finished poetic affect. There is the mazurka, on the one hand, and a Chopin mazurka on the other.

It is the very energy of such lyrical opportunism that projects a profound sense of wholeness in Homer's readers. The story is given as a catalogue, a sheepfold or pigsty, or a pasture of the Sun's cattle, with its occupants segregated and numbered. From within the telling there is an impulse to a different kind of order, a revelation of nature's analogies and an epiphany of human feeling and ingenuity despite the calendar and the catastrophic divine. A flexing of this impulse are those passages that describe and imitate the actual making of things: the caesurae in these descriptions are never more felt as jointures. (Consider δῶκέν οἱ πέλεκυν μέγαν, ἄρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσι, *Od.* 5.234, with its extraordinary *central* diaeresis. Ἄρμενον indeed!) The profusion of Achilles' shield yields in the *Odyssey* to the taut economy of Odysseus' raft and Odysseus' bed (5.244–61, 23.190–201). Such descriptions can stand in the way of the yarn. They are even somewhat self-indulgent: a poet's descriptive

immersion in the very act of making. Homer's fondness for such immersion is, however, an indicator of his heart. I do not find that the *Odyssey* itself displays or intends to display the finished economy of form in raft and bed. Poetry about making a bed does not turn the *Odyssey* into a bed. Instead the poem forever captures and inspires the *aspiration* to such form—or rather, to such transformation. (Recall that Aristotle's ὕλη, like its Latin calque 'materia', in fact means 'timber'.) The tree remains, rooted as ever, even as the bed emerges in a different plane. The moments of lyric intensity also create new planes of awareness, but they remain nestled in the tale, always breaking out in the telling, intimating a unity but rooted in a number.

Homer seems to be self-conscious, a 'metapoet', about the different levels of telling, the different levels of consciousness in the interplay between καταλέγειν and μυθέεσθαι. The most important link in the *Odyssey* itself, the transition from Phaeacia to Ithaca, is itself dressed in a kind of lyric stasis, with magic ships, a hero sleeping a sleep like unto death, and Phorcys' cove and the cave with two entrances. Such lyric moments must be recovered from, however. When he wakes up at last, the first thing Odysseus does is to count (ἀριθμέειν, 13.215) his treasures, for fear that the Phaeacians have turned from benefactors to thieves. They are all still there. The narrative catalogue is cumulative: what has accrued to one episode is carried forward to the next. After a nightmare of death or loss, one hastens when awake to reassure oneself that all is still present; one connects back, as Odysseus connects back, across a link that is a chasm. Moments of waking consciousness reconnect themselves backwards across moments of dream to buttress an identity. Proteus counts his seals—oblivious to what may be concealed by a skin—before he can sleep (4.451): counting reassures.

The savvy of the modern world privileges an 'account', a story with some sort of mathematical or otherwise formalized underpinning, over one without. Homer's expansive narrative accounting, however, becomes a ground for the very deepest rendering of things. Upon his landing at home Athena has transformed Odysseus so that his surroundings have become 'other-appearing' (ἀλλοειδέα, 13.194). Apparently the mist that makes *him* unrecognizable at the same time transforms his perception of the familiar external. (There may

already be at play in the Ϝιδ/Ϝειδ root a shuttling between visual and cognitive levels; at any rate, the phenomenology of 'recognition' requires such a play of levels.) The poet makes things strange, especially familiar things, only so that one may come to recognize them. The simple rhythmic epithets do this to ships and implements. Beyond the science of accounts, Homer's μῦθος in the *Odyssey* prepares and even manipulates one for the sake of moments, waking moments, of recognition. One sees this best where Homer stretches, as when Odysseus seems cruelly to manipulate his father with mocking disguise; but the payoff is the moment of disclosure that calls forth a memory which would have been far less potent without such an introduction. The scar is transcended as a mark of recognition. Odysseus recounts a gift from Laertes who named and numbered the fruit trees and vines as Odysseus trailed after him, a boy in the orchard (24.336–44). Odysseus remembers the numbers, thirteen pear and ten apple trees, forty figs and fifty vines: a catalogue that anchors him to a time, a place, and a father. In this case the catalogue *is* the disclosure, and we ourselves are justified in recognizing a kind of metapoetic inversion behind the episode's pathos. The Homeric task of bringing a catalogue to life is here achieved by the sourcing of a life in a catalogue.

The *Iliad* and its similes inevitably call forth from readers the literal (so-called) and the allegorical modes of interpretation, from words outward to things and their meanings. The *Odyssey* in its similes and lyric concentrations seems always to be turning inward, defining and pointing towards itself. Perhaps we could borrow from St Thomas Aquinas the notion of an anagogical interpretation. The *Odyssey* leads one like an initiate upon a certain path of song. Music is furthest apart in human discourse from representation, and the *Odyssey* approximates the self-contextualizing organism of wordless music. The arrival in Scheria is an initiation, or series of initiations: there is rebirth from water, followed by re-entry into the womb beneath the trees and the leaf-bed, followed by another emergence naked before Nausicaa. What this calls forth beneath the trees is a moment of deep poetic concentration: it is a moment of poetic arrival. On a second encounter the scene reverberates with anticipatory echoes. It is also luminous in itself, graced by the liquid sleep of Athena upon the eyes: it is an anagogical moment.

The poem lives through the efficacy of such moments. Even the Homecoming books, which *are* shrewdly plotted and formed, draw life from lyrical $\mu\hat{v}\theta os$. The contest of the axe-heads is born from Penelope's dream, revealed in a speech to the beggar, about the geese numbered twenty at her trough. Are they lost years or restored suitors? Once again a remembered or restored number serves to link across a chasm.

If $\mu v\theta o\lambda o\gamma\epsilon\acute{v}\epsilon\iota v$ means to develop revealing circles of story between the segments of a series that *could* be merely recounted ($\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota v$), the path of song traced out must be a combination of arrow and circle, a helical path of song. A yet different level of involution is represented by the similes and other loops of contemplative retrogression along the path. (The motion of the $\sigma v\rho\tau\acute{o}s$ itself is circular to the right, with leftward reversals; there is no arrow.) The most familiar face of the helix in the *Odyssey* is the heliacal, the celebrated line about the rise of Rose-Fingers the Dawn, always advancing, always recurring. Homer even sings a sunrise within the tale inserted in mid-air about Odysseus' naming and scarring. To repeat a line in Homeric narrative is immediately to put one in touch with the helix that forms the spine of both life and song. On the largest scale, the recurrence of the lines about Penelope's weaving and unweaving the web, itself an evocation of lunar rhythm, becomes like the return of a great planet to conjunction. The prophecy of Tiresias in particular becomes even more uncanny and profound through its repetition after long expanses. It becomes a kind of talisman. Repeating such deeply invested series of lines must be Homer's grandest way of creating perspective. The repetition of the prophecy does not, however, turn the *Odyssey* into a ring: it first occurs, after all, only in the eleventh book, as a part of the involved heart of the Tale of Alcinous. The creation of such grand narrative form in the *Odyssey* occurs in mid-stream, as it were; it emerges out of a deeper stratum of narrative succession, a chain, that is still ongoing and still present. When Odysseus repeats the prophecy to Penelope on the bed, we feel an emergent form, willed in the moment, that spans a retrospective expanse.

I have spoken of 'suspensions', 'framings of intensity', of 'lyric stasis' as intrusions into an onward movement. Perhaps it is possible to see the original of such 'epic movement' in the motions of the

planets. Even the dance is not the original: it is the planet-gods who, from the vantage of the earth, circle ever onwards in one direction, but with retrogressions apparently tied to the position of the sun. As an outer planet approaches opposition to Helios, so that he sets as the dawn rises, he slows down and appears not to move for some days. This point is referred to as a 'station'. He then retrogrades until he comes to a second station, appears again to remain perfectly still, and then seems to resume his course after a contemplative heliacal interlude. Hence the planets are not only polytropic: their motion is characterized by stasis and chiastic reversal as they come each time to face the sun. Hence they exhibit what we may now be tempted to call the 'epic movement'.

The impulses to push the envelope towards lyrical transport and to the revelation of the inner human through speeches in the narrative, to all that is $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta\upsilon$, are reined in by an anxiety about losing the thread, about losing count. A ludicrous and all the same extraordinary example is provided by the illiterate Sancho Panza. At a certain point in his telling of a story, he instructs his audience (the literate knight Don Quixote de la Mancha) to keep track of the number of the goats that the scornful shepherd escaping the amorous shepherdess has to ferry singly across a river. Don Quixote is a little weary of digression—it is dark and they are terrified by a mysterious rhythmic thumping that turns out to be fulling-mills—and he asks that the goats be understood to have got across. But the moment that Don Quixote admits he has lost track of the tally, the tale suddenly vanishes:

'How can that be?' replied Don Quixote. 'Is it so essential to the tale to know exactly how many goats have crossed that if you are one out in the number you cannot go on?'

'No, sir, not at all,' answered Sancho. 'But, when I asked your worship to tell me how many goats had got across and you replied that you didn't know, at that very moment everything I had left to say went clean out of my head, though there were some good and amusing things coming, I promise you.'

'So,' said Don Quixote, 'the story is finished, then?'

'As sure as my mother is,' said Sancho.

'Really,' replied Don Quixote, 'you have told me one of the strangest tales—true or false—that anyone could imagine in the whole world; and never in a lifetime was there such a way of telling it or stopping it, although I expected

no less from your excellent intelligence. But I am not surprised, for this ceaseless thumping must have disturbed your brains.'

   'That may well be,' replied Sancho, 'but I know that so far as my story goes there is nothing more to say, for it just ends where the error begins in counting the goats that cross over.'[19]

What is split between the consciousness of squire and knight is united in the storyteller: he must both expand and digress, and at the same time keep the tally. (Cervantes plays on *cuento*, 'tale' and *cuenta*, 'count'.) The elder who recounts the village ancestors must begin at the beginning of the begats; he may not start in the middle and is unable to 'zoom' right to a particular. There is a profound disruption involved when one is interrupted while counting. A storyteller caught up in the transports of the moment may well forget his place (perhaps especially when there is a 'ceaseless thumping' of dancers' feet in the background). The *Odyssey* with all its numberings is transcendently self-aware of the ground of traditional storytelling. But it is also bound up with its native land. What is impossible is a plot that is itself a form, as a playwright's or a novelist's. What we have instead in Homer is an opportunism seeking form but tethered to a tally as though by an umbilical cord. The first prompt to memory is the numbering thump of the dactyls, but the true mnemonic is the tally itself—a received catalogue of genealogies and deeds, one after another in unbreakable sequence—not 'formulas'. What *comes* to be memorable is something superadded: it is the poetry, and often also the poetics. Here is where the forms of the dance become crucial: smaller and broader circlings rhythmically punctuated by loops of retrogression. And herein are included not only the complex and developed wonders in Homer, like medieval illuminations upon the first letter in a sequence, but also the staple nouns and epithets that seem to haunt his narrative art and grace the elemental articulations of the dance as 'brief incantations'. Memory and the memorable in Homer are rooted in these 'choral signifiers'.

   In the tension between the remembering through catalogues and discrete sequences, on the one hand, and the articulating of affect and of meaning through the $\mu\acute{\iota}\mu\eta\sigma\iota\varsigma$ of human agents speaking (or of

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[19] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *The Adventures of Don Quixote*, tr. J. M. Cohen, London: Penguin Books, 1950, 154–5 (Part I, ch. 20).

non-human agents represented as though they were human), and through narrative epiphany, on the other—a tension that can be significantly reduced in conception to one between ἔπος and μῦθος—there is created a most fertile seedbed for poet and critic both. Twin trees spring from one spot of earth. The more and more intricate branchings of the analysts, who take Homer apart at the joints, are met twist for twist by the insinuating tendrils of the Unitarians, who *keep* experiencing an organism in between. That there is a poetic necessity answering to the critical schism: this is perhaps a new way to comprehend the phenomena of Homer's modern reception.

D. CHIASMUS

There is a level of Homeric narrative construction that is characterized by what I have called circlings and retrogressions, and represents a first level of circular imposition upon the narrative sequence—a precursor for the sorts of disclosure that are signified by μῦθος. It has been recognized and discussed, most recently by Friedrich, as 'chiasmus':

Chiasmus is one of the fundamental, orchestrating principles in Homeric art … [t]he most powerful chiasmus works both vertically and horizontally. In the *Iliad*, books 1 through 7 are related to 17 through 24 in that the internal structure of 1 matches that of 24, 2 that of 23, and so forth. Chiasmus may be highly symmetrical, but it may also be skewed or truncated. Chiasmus may work between the verbal text and a musical setting, a choreography, or even a ceramic representation. Chiasmus was sufficiently pervasive in Archaic Greece to warrant our speaking of a chiasmic mind, or mental set, or even worldview—with the proviso that comparable phenomena have emerged at other times, such as the European Baroque … as some would exclaim if not argue seriously, the entire *Iliad* and the entire *Odyssey* are chiasmic macro-epiphanies.[20]

One hastens to point out that the purest examples of this phenomenon in the European Baroque occur in dance music. Chiasmus

[20] Friedrich, 'Lyric Epiphany', 240.

is essentially a ring phenomenon, and a way of conceptualizing a certain form of ring composition. It is a retrogression within an onward circling. Students meet with this figure early in their exposure to classical rhetoric; it is taught as a feature of classical style. Whereas the logical or associational grouping of ideas could be represented as a : b :: c : d, the rhetorical order of the terms in a chiastic figure is a, b, d, c. The 'chi' refers to an X-shape which emerges when the four terms of a chiastic sequence are represented graphically with the first two (a, b) on top of the second two (d, c), and the related terms are joined by lines (the first to the fourth and the second to the third). 'Chiasmus' is therefore a concept that arises out of a schoolroom exercise, worked upon the written terms of a rhetorical sequence.

What is the aural reality of the chiastic sequence? It is a sequence that imitates a circle, a linear manifestation of a particular, retrogressive circular arrangement. There is no X, and no reason to suppose that an X occurs in the consciousness, whether in the production or the reception of speech. The X pertains to schoolroom geometry. Even if one considers chiastic order as a purely aural phenomenon, the reality 'behind' the style becomes a palpable thing. In the linearity of aural composition, it makes sense that the last should refer to the first in the presentation of a series of interrelated terms, so as to bring a sense of closure to the whole grouping. Chiastic order can be understood as a rhetorical version of the ring, imposed to elicit this sense of aural closure. There is an immediate musicality to the reversal: Smyth quotes Milton ('Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet').[21] Music sweetening and even imposing on the order of logic is the reality of rhetoric. Reversing the logical sense of proportion or association, so as to make the last term recall the first, can generate a sense of aural proportion, balance and symmetry (δουλεύειν καὶ ἄρχεσθαι . . . ἄρχειν καὶ δεσπόζειν, Plato's *Phaedo* 80a).[22] A sensation of stasis and transitory equilibrium is produced in the listener.

But such aural/aesthetic cues can be originally sourced in the ring-dance form that underlies Homer directly, and perhaps, culturally, all

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[21] Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 677.
[22] Ibid.

of Greek μουσική. Indeed, the inclusion of rhetoric under the rubric of μουσική, the art of the Muses, who were properly dancers, may well be traceable to the ring-dance imprint upon orders of speech and thought, reflected in such a pervasive phenomenon as chiasmus. (For the influence of dance imagery beyond the dancing space—in this case not chiastic but strophic—in matters linguistic and intellectual, but still μουσική—consider that Aristotle begins his treatise on rhetoric by calling it the counter-turn (ἀντίστροφος) of dialectic; and in mathematics and logic, recall that a 'converse' is an ἀντιστροφή.) The ring-based nature of chiasmus is alluded to by Friedrich: 'By a more practical and intelligible definition, chiasmus means that you leave a series by the same route that you entered by: abccba.'[23] In point of fact, chiasmus imitates the physical retrogression and retracing of steps within the συρτός. A ring form need not be chiastic. An ἀντιστροφή, for example, is a backward circling, but its rhythm recapitulates, rather than mirrors, the rhythm of the στροφή. Hence chiastic order is a specifically retrogressive form of ring composition.

A proliferation of terms for them in recent literature can mask the omnipresence of chiasmus in several characteristic manifestations within Homeric and epic narrative. Consider these entries in a narratological glossary compiled by Irene J. F. de Jong as a preface to her commentary on the *Odyssey*:

epic regression (ἐξ ἀναστροφῆς): a speaker mentions an event, person, or object, then moves back in time—typically with the particle γάρ or a relative pronoun—until a certain point of departure is reached (C—B—A—B'—C'). The second time (B'—C') the events are usually told in more detail. Epic regression is a form of multiple *ring-composition*.[24]

We are then given the following for *ring-composition*:

[W]hen the end of a passage repeats its beginning (simple: A—B—A', or multiple: A—B—C—B'—A'). The device is used mainly to enclose a chunk of explicit *characterization*, an *analepsis* ['flashback'], or a *description*, or as a structuring device in speeches and sets of speeches. Sometimes the situation has evolved at the moment of resumption (progressive ring-composition).[25]

[23] Friedrich, 'Lyric Epiphany', 240.

[24] Irene J. F. de Jong, *A Narratological Commentary on the* Odyssey, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, p. xiv.

[25] Ibid., p. xvii.

There is also this entry for *reverse order*:

(τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον, Homeric *hysteron proteron*, 'continuity of thought' principle): when two persons, objects, or ideas have been mentioned, it is the second which is uppermost in the mind and is taken up first (A—B—B'—A'). The principle may determine the structure of speeches, sets of speeches, subsequent scenes (going to bed—rising), or speech and narrative (order—execution).[26]

The chiastic form of these three different narrative devices is evident. Note that the first two are characteristic of *epic* narrative. It is therefore misleading to imply that they are forms in a more general narratology, as their placement in a technical glossary may suggest. De Jong herself claims to draw for her commentary on 'the exegetical scholia of antiquity, the interpretations by Unitarians, the analyses of type-scenes by oralists, and the close readings by non-oralists.'[27] Evidently there is nothing intrinsic to any of these approaches, including the narratological, about chiastic form. We may seek causes in aural aesthetics, or in a 'principle' of 'continuity of thought'. But an obvious and concrete motivation for these peculiar epic forms is in the influence of an originally ambient epic dance that circles onward with retrogressions.

Such narrative patterning in Homer has been luminously graphed by Whitman.[28] Figure 6.1 shows one of his schemata, circumscribing that Homeric heart of hearts, Demodocus' fully choral song of Ares and Aphrodite. What we see here in graphic form is a circular 'path of song,' a segment within a larger helix, or else a loop in a chain, that includes within it, and prepares for and frames moments of disclosure—be they speeches, similes, or poems of lyric narrative. This framing is itself achieved by chiastic retrogression, involution within involution towards moments of disclosure. Whitman's is the graph, therefore, of something we could begin to define formally as an 'episode'. At its centre in this case is a tale within a tale, a song within a song.

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid., p. vii.

[28] Cedric H. Whitman, *Homer and the Homeric Tradition*, New York: W. W. Norton, 1958, p. 289.

Odyssey 8

— Assembly   Question of Odysseus' identity. Arrangements
                for escort and festival

— Demodocus'   Strife of Odysseus and Achilles   ⎫
   Song   Odysseus weeps   ⎬ *mousiké*

        Games   ⎧ Challenge, taunt, and victory of   ⎫
                ⎪   Odysseus   ⎬ *gymnastiké*
                ⎨ Trojan hero challenges all   ⎪
                ⎩ Dancing   ⎭

    Demodocus' Ares and Aphrodite   ⎫ *mousiké*
    Song

        Games   ⎧ Dancing   ⎫
                ⎨ Presents to honor Odysseus   ⎬ *gymnastiké*
                ⎩ Bathing; farewell to Nausicaa   ⎭

— Demodocus' Song   Wooden Horse   ⎫ *mousiké*
                Odysseus weeps like a captive woman   ⎬

— Epilogue   Promise of escort. Question of
                Odysseus' identity

FIGURE 6.1   Whitman's schema for Demodocus' choral song of Ares and
Aphrodite in *Odyssey* 8

There is an ethos to the helical narrative style that is revealed in a
rather self-conscious metapoetic parable. Elpenor tells Odysseus in
Hades that when he was laid out to sleep ($\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\mu\epsilon\nu o\varsigma$, perhaps
punning on $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$) drunk on Circe's roof, he failed to pay
attention and go back down along the long staircase ($\kappa\lambda\acute{\iota}\mu\alpha\kappa\alpha$
$\mu\alpha\kappa\rho\acute{\eta}\nu$), but instead fell straight through ($\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\nu\tau\iota\kappa\rho\grave{\upsilon}$) the roof; his
neck was separated from his vertebrae and the soul went down
Hades' way (11.62–5). The fault is not that he presumed to climb
so high, drunk as a god, and to take his rest on the roof; the fault is
that he made his way back straight through, and failed to slant (or
circle) down the stairs the long way, returning the way he came.
Odysseus of course is not permitted to make his return straight
either; he must wander, circle, and rest a long long while. The deft
part here is that Elpenor himself is the mechanism by which Odys-
seus is forced to make a chiastic circle back from Hades to Circe's isle

before he can continue his journey home. The journey to Hades becomes, by means of Elpenor, the centre of both a physical and a narrative retrogression. In life and in storytelling, as in dance, there is a *correct* way of returning by turning. The head stays united to the spine.

The destiny cannot change: whether one circles around or goes straight to the point, one ends up dead. There is a minotaur in the labyrinth, and in this sense myth circles only to conceal the truth. But there is also revelation, even in the very possibility of contemplating the fact of death that circling and other misdirections can afford. The initiate dies and is reborn: there is a cycle to his rites both of confrontation and avoidance. Odysseus dies beneath the leaves, he is laid out in the Phaeacian boat, he is a fiery phoenix in his homecoming. The initiate transcends death by dying again and again: there is a sense, a conceit, a tactic, a faith, that allows that the death of the individual is not an ultimate but an ever-recurring phenomenon. The circle cheats the arrow. Bald-pated Odysseus' death from the sea will merely be his last.

To go straight through the story—to get straight to the point—is wrong. One *must* follow the sequence, but the awesome necessities of fate cannot prevent a poet from circling around to create centres and points of concentration, points of initiation, and come even to lose all sense of deathward time in the reality of a simile—or in telling tall stories through long winter nights for several books in Eumaeus' hut. Wrongheaded also is the λόγος of Aristotle, for different reasons. There is no such thing to be separated from the episodic. One might as well speak of the λόγος of a piece of music: 'a certain note, after long wandering through various chords …'. The path of song is self-defining, and the moments of insight that it yields in speeches, similes, and lyric narrative, are entirely dependent upon the sanctity of the anagogical path in its scale and in its diversions. There ought to be no excerpting, no ῥαψῳδία. It is the moments like the arrival in Scheria that are in fact peculiar (ἴδιον) to the poetics of the *Odyssey*, while Aristotle's λόγος, a 'story line', is peculiar to no act of making.

Wholeness in Homer is an aspiration, not a fact. It is an aspiration for Penelope. If the *Iliad* could be taken in at once it would be a version of Helen's tapestry. Perhaps it is the very web she is weaving in *Iliad* 3 that she ultimately gifts to Telemachus—her most beautiful

in its fineries and her largest one, that lay beneath all the rest and shone out like a star (*Odyssey* 15.107–8, recalling *Iliad* 6.294–5 where the same lines describe the Sidonian robe that had come to Troy with Helen herself on the original great circle of Paris' journey). The allusive repetition of the lines reaches across and beyond both epics. The gift is of course aimed past the boy at his mother (see 15.127–8). Helen sends a message to Penelope across unswimmable and scarcely narratable gulfs: the *Iliad* itself, a tapestry of the suffering on her account, is her splendid and perhaps unrepentant apology. Somewhat unexpectedly, Penelope looks back at her in the midst of the very speech in which she recognizes and embraces Odysseus in 23, back to the woman at the heart of it all—not perhaps of the story of Achilles, but the cause of the whole cycle, an energy at the periphery spinning the orb like Aristotle's prime mover. She begins by excusing her reticence, explains how she had learned to be afraid of deceitful men; but then seeks a most paradoxical *topos* in Helen, that serves subtly to shift the focus to Odysseus' mistakes, and to afford us the single most synoptic view of both epics from inside the poems. Not even Argive Helen, she says, would have slept with and enjoyed a foreigner, if she had known that the warrior sons of the Achaeans were only and merely to bring her back home (23.218–21). Would Odysseus also have left if he had known he was simply to return? She has come to see the whole in a circle that circumscribes both her husband's and Helen's folly, a coming full circle in the pattern of fate that encompasses the impetuous linearity of a woman's desire and the futility of a man's endeavour. From this perspective it is possible to see the primal source of her and her husband's sorrows not in Helen, but in a blindness within Helen that was in fact a visitation from god (222–4). From this perspective—transfixed by the sudden, aged awareness that there has been an immense retrogression—there can be reconciliation with husband and resignation to the squanderings of fate.

Homer himself never gets to the end. We do not see the Fall of Troy, but Briseis once again in Achilles' bed. Hector dies, to be sure, but we end with the antiphonal speeches of the women and the funeral. We do not see the death of Odysseus: we even presume to see a sort of finality and transcendence in his reunion with Penelope. The end recedes in the face of images of reconciliation and respite,

and even hope ($\dot{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\omega\rho\dot{\eta}$, 23.287). The time of dance is suspended time; the pattern of the dance allows fate to be seen as a woven thing. The prophecy of Tiresias, which Penelope interprets as a cause for Odysseus to hope for relief, with its sacrifice of the male animals and the ritual of the planted oar, seems to point to a reconciliation between land and sea and the people who work them—perhaps between Poseidon, etymologized by Eric Hamp as a vocative 'Lord Das' ($\pi o\sigma\epsilon\iota-\varDelta a_S-\omega\nu$),[29] and Demeter ($\varDelta a_S-\mu\eta\tau\eta\rho$). The male and the female come to a harmony, and in the suspense of this harmony, achieved in mid-stream, the death that is known to lie at the end is itself suspended. Life becomes infused with a sense of 'return'. In returning we seem to others as though we have escaped from death.

The impulse to circle in the face of life's mortal linearity has also a pedestrian origin. All the rest of this would have been impossible if such an impulse had not diverted the human foot from its purposes backward and forward, to bear its burden sideways with bended knee, so to circle (with retrogressions) in the way of the cosmos and the dance of the Muses.

[29] Eric Hamp, personal communication, 1989.

7

The Genesis of Homeric Poetry (a Brief Synthesis): The 'Intemporizing' Cataloguer

What can we now offer as a coherent picture of how Homeric poetry came about? What natural history, or 'just so' story, can we tell in place of the fantasy of generations of extemporizing bards, and the crudity of metrical building blocks?

Catalogues are the source of this poetry, but catalogues themselves are not poetry, they are lists—lists of people, gods, women in succession—and also lists of events. They are remembered in the way of counting numbers, and they mark time, while time itself can be understood and concretized as a counting number; and this primitive connection between numbering, remembering, and time is centrally and vividly thematic throughout the obviously non-primitive *Odyssey*. Think of seals, geese, and pear trees, of transported treasures and the tally of the cows of the sun's days and the tale of the daily pig.

The earliest recorded hexameters do not preserve catalogues. Nor does it seem necessary that a list be metrical. So our story tells that catalogues became poetry (and perhaps first became Greek—claims are now made for the external provenance of some of the content of Greek myth, although not, one may presume, for the human genealogies) when they met with a particular dactylic dance form and dance rhythm, and became chanted in a circle so as to bring their elements to ritual epiphany. The listed names both extended and delimited themselves according to the tropic points of the dance, to become noun-and-epithet phrases ('choral signifiers') that summoned their referents to the performance space. The catalogic

marking of past time was allowed in this way to impregnate the present, so as to create a *presence.*

The expansion of the catalogue elements by means of loops 'picked up' by relative clauses was a simple and probably an automatic response of the cataloguer becoming a tale-teller, as he worked more and more with the summoning power of noun-and-epithet phrases and the chosen aesthetics of ring composition, rather than with list elements adapted to a metre that of necessity *had* to 'loop' themselves off. Oralist theorizers also note this expandability by means of relative clauses as a contributor to the technique of extemporizing. What they have missed is the function and *Gestalt* of the frame for these expansions. The motive of extemporizing is deceptively similar but in its root notion anathema to that of an 'intemporizing' cataloguer: here instead we find a notion of preserving a memory in an absolutely distinct and definite order (like that of a genealogy), while expanding *within* it in ways that *must not disrupt* that order. Our story therefore gives us a cataloguer becoming a poet by expanding on some or each of the terms in a list, evoking its life-giving elements, and often making it circle back on itself chiastically with a repetition of themes, perhaps as a way of rejoining the list mnemonically, before proceeding to the next term. He thereby both remembers and preserves the relative temporal order of the catalogue: he is able to digress as expansively as he desires, but returns via the path of his introduced themes in reverse order. Thus both the mechanism and the art of ring composition spring from one source. By means of it this sort of tale-teller always does his imaginative and expansive poetic work, but also always keeps his place, within the larger frame of the catalogue.

Chiastic order is a specifically retrogressive and epic form of ring composition that points in sympathy to the origin of all 'epic movement' in a peculiar, dactylic dance, characterized by a pivotal retrogression. In such epic movement there is a way forward and a way back (abccba) that delimits a retrogression within an onward cycle. Hence there is a meeting of motives here—need transforms into desire: a cataloguer's need to re-find his place matches the aesthetic sense of a peculiar movement.

Within the fixed sequence of Odysseus' wanderings, the Lotus-Eaters receive only a few choice lines; but Odysseus expands the

Cyclops episode with all his Homeric resourcefulness in narrative, similes, and speeches. A necessary lop-sidedness that results from the unequal treatment of epic 'intemporizing', as compared with the symmetries and climaxes under the novelist's control, is balanced somewhat—in the case of the *Odyssey* at least—by a sense that the teller of the Tale of Alcinous has imbued and concentrated each segment of the story with the whole of his distinctive vision. That is to say, even in the twenty lines of the story of the Lotus-Eaters, he has distilled the gist, of νόστος ('return') and forgetting; so that the episodes are like differentiated cells, each carrying the whole set of the organism's chromosomes. (Note that, by contrast, in the 'catalogue version' of the Tale, told to Penelope in their bedroom, the Cyclops episode gets only two lines—less there than either Aeolus or the Laestrygonians. The catalogue is like an unexpanded accordion.) This thematic unity is perhaps an indicator that it is one poetic consciousness that is both traversing and expanding on the elements in the telling of the Tale. In the larger *Odyssey*, however, there is not just a traversing but a sequencing: the telling of the Tale of Alcinous, for example, although it contains the actual beginning of Odysseus' return, becomes framed in narrative performance by the chronologically later Phaeacian episode. But the power in such meta-sequencing of received catalogues, because of the nature of the traditional catalogues themselves, can never approach the power wielded by the novelist over time in his created narrative universe.

For all their richness and power, the *form* of the major Hesiodic poems needs almost no further account. The catalogue frame of these compositions is transparent: one need only supply a poet worthy of being remembered by name to supply also that 'intemporized' richness and that power. The developed complexity and beauty of such catalogic narrative, turning into poetry, made it something worth sitting down and listening to, something that one could be instructed by, even if one was young enough that the rhythmic phrasing also made one want to get up and dance. And conversely, the seated attention that such narrative commanded would have encouraged a didactic element in the ancient singer-songwriter, no longer only a dancers' bard.

Note that we also find the relative clause as an entry into mythic digression throughout the extravagantly idiosyncratic poetic forms

of Pindar; Pindar's 'intemporizing' rings reach new levels of sequential determination, in that the myths are often told in *reverse chronology*. Hence 'epic techniques', that can be confusing to a modern or otherwise foreign sensibility, came to be aesthetically choice-worthy in later generations and later poetic media. There is no reason to connect them to extemporizing composers. Rather, they should be seen as techniques growing out of an aesthetic project that is common to both epic and lyric in Greek: the *choral unfolding of linear myth*.

A further stage needs to be told, however, before this synthesis can be sustained to the point of Homeric poetry. This comprised the level of development of the heroic tales, the κλέα ἀνδρῶν, but also the tales of the gods like Demodocus', and the various hymns to divinities. The narrative catalogues that gave birth to such tales had little more than temporal coherence; that is, one event (or nascent episode) followed another in, say, the *Little Iliad*, only because that is the order in which the events were seen to have happened, or that is how they were heard to have happened. Homer's *Iliad*, however, is an obviously chosen splice of action, crafted around two emergently necessary deaths (Patroclus' and Hector's)—so as to fit like a loop stitched into a larger and already determined sequence of action and fate—and filled with the digressive–retrogressive rings that came to be called episodes. And the *Odyssey* goes so far as to experiment with sequencing—locating the telling of stories in chosen contexts, using the flashback—and retrogressing, pushing forward, and circling like some wheeling συρτός of a plot, seemingly always mindful of a centre in the sacred hearth and the living tree.

Perhaps the most significant development of the stage of craft anterior to Homer was the sort of digressive insertion that centred on a speech. Such a disclosure of will and intention on the part of a protagonist, in the course of a catalogue of events in which he participated, was the original intrusion of μῦθος into the numbered and numbering ἔπος, and probably the first introduction of μίμησις into the rhythmic storyteller's arsenal as he expounded a catalogic sequence of narrative. It is a transforming histrionic moment in performance when Homer takes on the voice and the staff of the old priest at the beginning of the *Iliad*. A speech in any sort of narrative is a suspension of things, on several levels. In imitating the mind and

the organism of a protagonist come to speech, one enters fully into the notion of organism as such. The chanting cataloguer becomes of necessity an artist of the human experience when he speaks another's speech in the course of recounting an episode. In Homer of course the speeches have a Shakespearean realization and potency. But even the first attempt of the catalogue-teller to reproduce a divine or human speech in epic metre had to have been, in the nature of things, a fully-formed entrance into the world of art and the representation of thought, like the birth of Athena from the head of Zeus. One need only present a Trojan deliberating, whether to stay by the oak, or to go out into the plain to confront a raging Achilles, to immerse an audience fully in the notions of 'choice' and 'dilemma' that characterize human experience.

One had always to remember the frame, however. A speech in a novel is in some way integral to the plot, which exists as a larger, authorial, and climactic structure. A speech inside catalogue poetry, on the other hand, is like a passing window into life and form that yields merely to what must and has to happen next.

About the similes, a modern bard in English notes the following:

In performance, I found myself isolating the similes somewhat and marking them—pausing a little before and after, changing the voice, dropping any percussion I may have been using—in order to bring out their quality as poetic events distinct from the poetry of the narrative and speeches. I found that the narrative resumed with a kind of quiet power after a simile had been given full attention in this way, and that the audience's engagement with the performance was deepened.[1]

The simile also is a suspension from and within the narrative, and it is possible to see at least a prompt to the form of a simile in the Greek conjunctions that link together a catalogue. Homer of course has never been matched in the quality of the production and deployment of these forms. One of the virtues of Stanley Lombardo's translations of Homer is that he offsets the similes in italics. One gets the impression from scanning his pages that there are regular recurrences of these 'italicized moments'—sheer poetry in performance—as

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[1] Stanley Lombardo, Translator's Preface, in *Homer*, Iliad, Indianapolis: Hockett, 1997, pp. x–xi.

though these were the moments that both singer and audience were waiting for—as though everything else in Homer were merely filler.

We must put aside this story, however, when we come to the moments of narrative lyric that Homer sometimes discovers. Such poetry is not to my mind foreseeable from an origin in a narrative catalogue. If his speeches and similes are things of wonder, then Homer's moments of narrative lyric—narrative $\mu\hat{\upsilon}\theta o\varsigma$—are simply miracles. And miraculous achievements in the world's poetry can never be accounted for, although it is surely worthwhile to recognize them for what they are.

In the relationship of Continental classical composers to folk dance and folk dance rhythm, in the relation of Shakespeare to morality plays, in the relation of twentieth-century art to primitivism, there is a manifestly ubiquitous phenomenon that seems so obviously to apply as well in the relation of Homer to epic and to the bards. The ancient case of Tamil *cankam* composition also contributes to the paradigm. What we infer from the comparison is this: that there is no contradiction whatsoever in saying that great and famous artists can be linked concretely and profoundly to the forms produced by an anonymous folk tradition; and at the same time, that the works of such artists must be separated in their analysis from the dictates of such a tradition, in that they indicate sources of energy and form that can in no useful or plausible way be linked to those of the tradition. A. K. Ramanujan comments on the Tamil material that

The poems are not the result of rapid composition like oral epics, but of subtle care and reworking … Yet the authors were close to the stock-in-trade of bards and minstrels who were often their subjects and who were very much alive all around them. The poems are witnesses to a transition.[2]

Shakespeare knew his players, but in tragedy, comedy, and historical-pastoral, he transformed the territory and continues to do so. He cannot be plausibly subsumed as an exemplar of some broader historical construct, such as 'Elizabethan drama'. In a similar way, a treatment of 'Greek epic' can only reductively, piecemeal, and somewhat esoterically draw on the works of Homer. And a course

[2] A. K. Ramanujan, *Poems of Love and War*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1985, 273.

on Greek epic must of course begin its investigation of form not with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* but with the form of a dance and with the form of the catalogue.

We know little or nothing of Homer's homeland—its population, its location, its antiquity, its wealth, its social structure, its vernacular. Of course we know even less of him—high caste or low, whether he worked for a king, whether he was itinerant among several populations, whether he was female, whether he was married, whether he *liked* his audience. As we have seen, the notion that Homer's text is a window to tradition depends upon Parry's hypothesis. But Parry made the wrong comparison. The 'odd' features of Homeric narrative, such as repetitions, rings, and signature phrases and lines, which led to a search for extrinsic pressures, are all of them natural to dance music. Hence it could be expected that a narrative conceived under the influence of an endlessly repeating dance rhythm would show verbal and narratological versions of these forms. But beyond any oddness of presentation, what Homer left us was challenging stories and sublime poetry. He was, in equal parts, a scandalous moralist and an extraordinary composer. We do not know where he came from, but the emerging Hellenic culture that claimed him never recovered, from Homer's gods or Homer's truth.

8

The Lyric Orchestra

I wish now to give the briefest hint of the remarkable discoveries to be made in the genre of Greek lyric through an application of the new theory of the accent in a choral analysis. It is hoped that a few examples will be sufficient to entice new students to a musical analysis of ancient poetry, and to persuade the reader that the corpus of Greek lyric is a treasure as yet unearthed, one of the greatest hauls amongst all the ancient treasures of the world.

A. THE LORD OF THE DANCE

At a certain critical moment in the development of Greek μουσική—a moment only to be compared in significance with the actor's later emergence from the chorus—the bard stood up from his place at the centre of the round and took it on himself to lead the dancers, to become lord of the dance. So firm did the lyric poet's position become as ἐξάρχων ('leader') of the dance, that by the third century CE Athenaeus would rather emend than let stand a passage from Homer which implies a different relation between singer and dancers. This description occurs at a wedding feast at Sparta in the *Odyssey* (4.17–19):

> μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλπετο θεῖος ἀοιδὸς
> φορμίζων· δοιὼ δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ᾽ αὐτοὺς
> μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνευον κατὰ μέσσους

              amongst them sang a godly minstrel
playing on the lyre; a pair of acrobats in the group,
leaders of the song and dance, were tumbling in their midst.

Athenaeus seems almost to have been offended by the notion that
two tumblers could be called ἐξάρχοντες of the song and dance, in the
presence of a divinely inspired bard. He would emend the participle
to ἐξάρχοντος, producing an absolute construction in apposition to
the singer. William Mullen quotes Athenaeus' justification:

For it was not the acrobats who were *exarchontes*, but they clearly danced
while the bard himself was *exarchōn*; for leading is proper to the lyre. That is
why Hesiod says in the Aspis, 'And the goddesses, the Muses of Pieria, led the
song (*exērchon aoidēs*)'; and Archilochus says, 'I myself, to the flute's ac-
companiment, am *exarchōn* of the Lesbian paean'; and Stesichorus calls the
Muse 'leader of the song and dance (*archesimolpon*)'; and Pindar calls
preludes 'leaders of the dance (*hagēsichora*)'.   (Ath. 5.180d–e)[1]

I have argued that in epic, the poet was essentially an accompanist to
an independent dance rhythm; on this view it is perfectly natural that
Homer would feel no rivalry, and perhaps even some kinship, with a
virtuosic acrobat who syncopated the rhythm of his very body with
the rhythm of the dancers' feet, just as the bard syncopated his words.
Homer was a beneficiary of the dance's inspiration, he was not its
leader or director. But it is apparent that Athenaeus had never heard
of a lyric poet who was not also the ἐξάρχων of the dance. This
indicates that there may have been a significant change in compos-
itional and performance practice between the lost age of epic and the
historical period in which the earliest lyric poets began to assert their
craft. Athenaeus at his late date is persuaded to make an awkward
emendation and is followed, I might add, by some modern editors
and translators, because Homer's description runs contrary to the
sense of the entire corpus of the lyric genre. As Mullen comments:

Clearly Athenaeus has been moved to muster some of the most authoritative
names from the history of Greek poetry in defense of his contention; and
while it is impossible to take his interpretation of these poets' phrases
as proving anything definitive about choral practice in the world of the

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[1] William Mullen, *Choreia: Pindar and Dance*, Princeton: Princeton University
Press, 1982, 15.

Homeric epics, it would be impressive if with complete editions of all the great choral poets before him he found nothing in their words to contradict his thesis.[2]

Let us reject the emendation, and assume that there was, after all, a decisive shift in choral practice between Homer's world and the Greece of the lyric poets. What might be the implications of such a shift in the composer's role for the poetics of lyric? Do the distinctive aesthetic features of lyric χορεία, as compared with epic χορεία, originate in the changed perspective of the poet who had used to be an accompanist to the round dance, but had now become its choreographer?

Consider the vantage of the epic poet. He composes his verses in the company of an independent and autonomous rhythm; this rhythm has a fine structure that is endlessly repeating. On his side, his Greek has its own built-in rhythmic and melodic pattern. As the words begin to flow, they seek to harmonize with the recurrent fine structure of the dance, reflecting prosodically and even morphologically the quantities, the turns and the cadence points of the independent movement, at times in agreement and at other times in counterpoint, shaping and being shaped by the rhythm and length of the articulated segments of the dance. When we recall that the original dance is not only endlessly repeating in its fine structure, but also in its coarse structure, coming full circle and endlessly circling, it is apparent that recurrent metrical phrases are a natural offspring of this composition; as the parents, the dance and the verse, weave and interweave.

In the larger context, this manner of ποίησις comes to yield not so much a narrative sequence as a narrative fabric, with episodes forming closed loops inside a larger framework. Helen's web (*Iliad* 3.125–8) is a visual realization of the aural *Iliad*, containing embroidered within it choice scenes of the struggle between the Achaeans and the Trojans on her account, much like the episode of solo combat between Menelaos and Paris that interrupts her in mid-work. This very quality of the *Iliad* was the condition for the possibility of rhapsodic performance, of unstitching episodic loops from the frame and resequencing them in the moment—with perhaps an improvised link from the mixing board.

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[2] Ibid.

Consider, by contrast, the vantage of the lyric poet. He is alone responsible for his dancers' rhythm. There is no independent movement against which he is obliged to harmonize, except insofar as the pattern of feet which emerges from his ordering of words may impose its own constraints as to possible rhythmic and orchestic resolutions, and hence as to possible word choices. But initially, at least, the poet gains an unprecedented freedom by moving to take over the dance, in that he creates his own dance phrases, and through them his own dance, whose circling pattern bears the unique stamp of the artist and his word. Where the epic poet responds to rhythm, the lyric poet creates it. This freedom also gives way, however, to an unprecedented level of constraint: in the antistrophe and succeeding systems, as well as in the second and following epodes, the chosen rhythm becomes a fixed form. When one considers the complexity of Greek lyric metres, one can appreciate the astonishing achievement of the lyric poets; it would seem to have been skill enough simply to find words that fitted the measures, in the manner of modern librettists and songwriters, but Pindar and Simonides were quoted in later generations for their wisdom, not just for the beauty and the richness of their rhythms. These poets were masters of finding the perfect word at the perfect time.

What were for the epic poet independent features of the dance—the rhythm and its circling repetition—become subsumed under the control of the lyric poet and his $\lambda \acute{o} \gamma o \varsigma$. What are lost are the distinctive aesthetic features of epic $\chi o \rho \epsilon \acute{\iota} \alpha$, in particular the musical and semantic quality of recurrent dance phrases (what we have called 'choral signifiers'). The genesis of these phrases depended on the marriage of two independent sources of motion, the dance and the word, the foot and the voice. The epic poet was able at times to be passive to the rhythm, to surrender his speech to the repeating movement, and sit back, as it were, while his limpid phrases turned into music; Homer in particular learned to exploit the evocative power of a recurrent phrase, so that the stylistic imprint of circling music also served him in the advancement of a story and the conjuring of its vivid, sonorous presence.

There is also a marriage of foot and voice in lyric verse, but on terms far different from the independent give and take of epic. In lyric the dance is fundamentally subordinate to the word: the lyric

poet is a creator of rhythm, he is never passive, except to his own peculiar rhythmic microcosm. The dancer in a lyric chorus depends in a practical, physical sense upon the poet's word, both for his progress and his return in the round, in that the dance rhythm and its repetition are non-existent except as by-products of the verbal train of the verse. The chorister has no motion of his own; he is, rather, controlled by the rhythm and harmony of the very words he sings. The syncopation of ictus and accent in epic depended on the disjunction and conjunction of the relatively autonomous motions of the dance and the words. In lyric, this syncopation is achieved entirely through the λόγος: one sequence of words can at times produce a disunity of emphasis between the dancer's foot and his voice, and at other times, at the resolution of a period, bring his vocal accent and the sense of his step into agreement, recomposing his mind and body *through* the word. This remarkable capacity of lyric composition and performance brings into full fruition the latent musical potential of the Greek language, which has its syllabic quantities, the elements of a metrical pattern, given independently of the position of a word's harmonic contonation.

It is certainly true that in other languages as well, including English, lyric poets must generate a sense of independent metrical ictus as well as a counterpointing rhythm-music through the very same lines of verse. What is remarkable in the Greek case is the complexity and the calculated uniqueness of such metrical patterns, on the one hand, and their essentially orchestic quality on the other. Greek lyric metres cannot be generated or understood as stylizations of normal speech rhythms, which were generally iambic in Greek as in English; the λόγος is rather required to generate a genuine and relatively independent dance pattern, composed of various kinds of 'feet' or dance steps—an achievement of high order in itself, which earns a Greek poet alone the title and duty of chorus-teacher (χοροδιδάσκαλος)—and then simultaneously to harmonize with it.

In this form of ποίησις, in contrast with epic, every aspect of the rhythm and its repetition is, in a fundamental way, *chosen*. Hence every word in a lyric sequence, by means of which the rhythm and repetition come to light, is also perceived to be specially chosen. For the lyric dancer, the words are elements of a distinctive choreography; unlike the epic dancer, if he is to learn his particular

movement, he must concentrate on each word as it passes by, whether it links up with its predecessors in a rhythmic phrase, or perhaps passes in transit towards a new motion, or comes to a cadence. For the spectator or the critic, from that day to this—even without an obvious connection to a peculiar, virtuosic, one-show-only dance—each word in a lyric poem is read with a demand upon it which is not so felt in more song-like forms, where the rhythm is imposed from without: it must justify its chosen place in the total order of rhythm and meaning. Lyric poets themselves expect no less of their words or their interpreters.

The dependence of the rhythm upon the word, and the concomitant chosenness of the word, conspire to destroy the spell of epic and to produce a new aesthetic. The speech style of Homer flows with an energy that is, at least in part, external to the language. Certain words and phrases seem from time to time to surface, as it were, in profile against the background stream; but they also seem to be free to submerge again in the onward current. Effects like that of *enjambement* or a displaced cadence can bring even familiar and highly recurrent phrases into sudden and momentary focus; but the stream of the dancers' impetus is then bound once again to impose its enveloping pressure. Thus there is a delectable interplay in epic between the word and the cyclic rhythm in nine and eight, which makes dance phrases out of names and epithets, drawing upon the immediacy of their melodic evocation, but which can also focus light of a peculiar, haunting clarity upon their semantic intention. (Consider what we have said, for example, about the initial placement of ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν in *Iliad* 1.7, and Vivante's list of 'dislodged' epithets.) In lyric, on the other hand, there is less basis for such an interplay, for there is no external source of energy beyond the quantitative substance of the words themselves. Each solid word must therefore take, and earn, its place in the spotlight.

It is a natural consequence that there is no room here for merely titular epithets, or the aesthetic of melodic evocation as it is manifested in epic. An adjective from the vantage of the lyric poet is necessarily an assertion, an attribution, a predication. In the transformation of choreographic practice subordinating rhythm to word, we find the source of the assertive, chosen quality of the epithet, if that is what it should still be called, observed by Parry in Pindar,

together with what he refers to as the 'particularized meaning' of the epithets in the opening anapaests of Aeschylus' *Persae*.³ Πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς in Homer is often simply the full, summoning name of Achilles; but a lyric poet could not say πόδας ὠκὺς without intending it in some way, implicating some aspect of the performance or the subject. He should at least make a significant allusion to Homer or to Achilles in connection with the phrase, or he should have to stand up to our severest criticism with regard to lyric verse—a criticism that until recently had been misapplied to epic—that the poet is merely filling up his line, submitting to metrical constraint. What we look for instead in the lyric poet is a mastery over rhythm and repetition, a mastery over time, with a sixth sense for the καιρός ('right moment'). So it is that the poet's skill is called into account to hit the right word with his archery, at the right moment in the rhythm; so also does the lyric poet carry off all the credit and the glory of the dancers' performance, for the success of his aim and the wisdom of his word.

The development in relation to the round dance of so-called lyric composition out of epic has therefore nothing to do with the lyre or the singing voice, which are features of performance common to both; it has to do with the transcendence and mastery of the word over the dance's rhythm and repetition. (Note that this mastery does not involve the imposition of linguistic rhythms on the dance, but rather the control and sequencing of orchestic rhythms through the word.) The larger significance of this basically poetic innovation is hard to circumscribe. One might speak of the emergence into history of the dominant role of the λόγος in Greek consciousness, as master of the physical and the sensual, in both an aesthetic and a psychological sense; perhaps also of the transcendence of the λόγος over religious ritual. The development of lyric out of epic, and the later development of drama out of lyric, along with some other candidates across the span of history, have been severally interpreted as the moment when the 'individual' emerged upon the stage of western consciousness. This at least is clear: the lyric poets needed no critics or interpreters to explain to them their new-found significance, in music or ritual or theology or society. They seem to be quite well

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³ Parry, 'The Traditional Epithet in Homer', in *The Making of Homeric Verse*, 166–8.

aware of their skill, knowledge, and influence. There is an arrogance in their poetizing that is wholly absent in Homer. Perhaps this goes with the territory, of becoming accountable for so many levels of the performance in the round. But I hope it is possible to prefer Homer's sort of individuality to Pindar's.

B. PROSODIC AGREEMENT

Towards the beginning of one of the standard treatments of lyric metres, we read that

[t]here is no vestige of evidence that dynamic stress had any structural significance in Greek verse rhythm before the Imperial period ... In spoken poetry the pitch-accent must of course have been audible above the quantitative rhythm, to which it stood in no kind of regular relation; in sung poetry also rhythm was independent of word-accents, and it is quite uncertain how far the melodic pitch took any account of the spoken.[4]

The confidence of these assertions is buttressed by a tradition among metricians that reaches back to Hephaestion in the second century CE. Against all type, there is supposed to have been no meaningful relation between the natural prosody of Greek and its poetic rhythms, and metrical analysis has proceeded in terms of abstract quantitative forms, such as Hephaestion's choriambs, and Maas's D's and e's (in the analysis of the so-called dactylo-epitrite metre). None of the terminology developed in these analyses is even remotely contemporary with the ancient poets whose verses are in question. Metrics in the tradition of Hephaestion is all later than late.

Against this nearly 2,000-year-old tradition we have opposed two solid lines of argument, one based on modern linguistic scholarship, and the other on the neglected evidence of an ancient witness. We now have a new theory of Greek prosody based on Allen's landmark study of the ends of lines of stichic verse. The pattern of stress prominence in Greek words that emerged there has been shown in

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[4] A. M. Dale, *The Lyric Metres of Greek Drama*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968, 5.

the present study to be linked directly with the tonic accent, corresponding perfectly, in fact, with the recessive accent rules. There *is* therefore a relation between accent and metre in Greek verse, and it is likely to be entirely typical. The new theory allows the colour to be restored faithfully to the falsely pristine marble.

The testimony of Plato, a contemporary of the last great phase of choral composition in Greece, is both ample and specific. As we have seen, χορεία is described by him as a unity combined out of both rhythm and harmony; the elements of this harmony are referred to in the same terms, ὀξύς and βαρύς, sharp and heavy, as the prosodic features of the Greek language. Plato is explicit that this harmony and its elements are expressed by the voice, and not primarily by some instrumental accompaniment (*Laws* 665a). It is therefore likely, against the sense of the pure mathematics and 'quantitative rhythms' of the later metrical tradition, that there was in fact a most intimate structural relation between dynamic accent and verse rhythm in Greek, on the basis of Plato's contemporary descriptions. For their part, rhythm and metre were not understood by him as the arrangements of abstract quantities, but as the numberings of physically felt movements. It is therefore imperative that the sequences of longs and shorts in a poem be grouped not according to analytical convenience but according to choreographic realities, so far as these can still be discerned. The unity of the totality of χορεία or danced verse was understood by Plato as arising out of the disagreement of the forces of rhythm and harmony, moving in time and space towards their agreement. Such a movement from disagreement to agreement between foot-step and vocal accent would have been physically manifested and demonstrated in the dance: it should not have been subtle or distinctive, as the meaning of the stream of words may well have been; like that from dominant to tonic in modern harmony, such a movement would in fact have been basic and common to the whole range of composition and performance, in that singular era when the circle dances of the Greek folk became the musical medium for the poetic imagination and the poetic λόγος.

Can this movement still be discovered in our received texts? Consider one of the most glorious exemplars of the possibilities of the new lyric composition, Pindar's *Olympian* 1. The metrical pattern of this logaoedic ode is astonishingly complex, all the more so for

Table 8.1. Pindar *Olympian* 1, last periods of strophes and antistrophes

Str. *A*	μάκαιραν Ἱέρωνος ἑστίαν	11
Ant. *A*	κράτει δὲ προσέμειξε δεσπόταν	22
Str. *B*	τότ᾿ Ἀγλαοτρίαιναν ἁρπάσαι	40
Ant. *B*	σέθεν διεδάσαντο καὶ φάγον	51
Str. *Γ*	ἑτοῖμον ἀνεφρόντισεν γάμον	69
Ant. *Γ*	μναστῆρας ἀναβάλλεται γάμον	80
Str. *Δ*	ἔχει μελιτόεσσαν εὐδίαν	98
Ant. *Δ*	ἔτι γλυκυτέραν κεν ἔλπομαι	109

being sustained over four triads; it is a pattern that defies the sense of an English speaker used to simple, declamatory rhythms. What is more, an analysis of the overlying pattern of accent, even according to the new theory, does not at first sight appear to clarify the metre and its bewildering succession of longs and shorts. It strikes one that in order to perceive a pattern of disagreement moving toward agreement between an underlying ictus and an overlying accent, one needs first to perceive this underlying ictus. This can be very hard to do, naturally, if the feet are obscure. We shall see in due course that the notion of agreement is complicated by the fact that, very often, the accent can *determine* the ictus, where the metrical pattern admits equally of either ascending or descending interpretations. We have already met with this situation in the last foot of the hexameter; but elsewhere the *ictual determination* of quantity and accent is more typical of epic. The reverse in lyric, the *accentual determination of ictus*, is symptomatic of the new dominance that I have been describing, of word over metre.

In the wake of an earlier complexity, consider the last periods of the strophes and antistrophes of *Olympian* 1 (as printed by Snell), where we should expect to find the agreement Plato describes (Table 8.1). The new theory of the accent here reveals for the first time that the pattern of harmonic reinforcement of the metre at the end of each strophe and antistrophe is almost exactly the same:

$$\cup\overset{\prime}{-}\cup\cup\cup\overset{\prime}{-}\cup-\cup\overset{\prime}{-}$$

(The acute sign here is used for both oxytonic and barytonic prominence; the majority of the stresses in these lines are in fact

barytones.) Given the extravagant variety of the accentuation in other parts of the verse, this tendency to conformity at the ends of all eight stanzas cannot be coincidental. When it comes to music, Plato defers to Damon; he nowhere indicates in his comments about disagreement and agreement in harmony and rhythm that he is saying anything unusual or innovative about Greek poetry. His observations are general and generic, not limited to one or another style of verse. What we see here at the points of resolution at the end of each of the strophes and antistrophes of Pindar's sumptuous *Olympian* 1, is what Plato meant by agreement between accent and rhythm, which emerges in this poem from variety and disagreement to create a music.

It will be apparent that this agreement is not directly related to the location of word endings with respect to metrical junctures; analysis on these terms has heretofore been the only recourse of metrical theorists. The exposure of this hidden pattern of agreement, in this notoriously complex ode, is another indication that the new theory at last lays hold of the accentual reality. It is also striking that in these final periods the response between individual pairs of strophe and antistrophe extends beyond accent to the pitch contour itself: within each pair, the printed accent marks correspond. Where strophe *A* has in the final period a post-acute barytone reinforcing the ictus, antistrophe *A* also has a post-acute barytone (e.g. μάκαιραν—κράτει δε, Ἱέρωνος—προσέμειξε); where strophe *Γ* has an oxytone, antistrophe *Γ* has an oxytone (ἀνεφρόντισεν—ἀναβάλλεται); where a circumflex, a circumflex (ἑτοῖμον—μναστῆρας). It would seem, on the one hand, that even at these moments of agreement, which need to be the most invariant elements in the compositional structure, the poet sought a variety in their implementation; but that at these same moments within each strophe/antistrophe pair, at least in the case of *Olympian* 1, there was an identity of verbal melody, and hence perhaps also of any non-verbal melodic accompaniment which attended the harmony of the words. Late musical settings apparently suggest an identity of melody in both strophe and antistrophe, without particular regard for verbal prosody.[5] Perhaps, however, this approach

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[5] The view of Pöhlmann and West, *Documents of Ancient Greek Music*, 16–17.

The Lyric Orchestra

to lyric melody belongs to the New Music. The text of *Olympian* 1 suggests an identity of melody only at the ends of each strophe/antistrophe pair. It would appear that Pindar has opted in this poem for what amounts to a kind of 'accentual rhyme', a correspondence in pitch-pattern as well as prominence, between the final periods of each pair of stanzas.

There is an apparent exception to the accentual uniformity in line 40, where the accent falls on the first rather than the second syllable of the period. But the elision of τότε in τότ' Ἀγλαοτρίαιναν, without suppression of its accent—an acute on an open syllable—may well require a completion of its contonation on the syllable Ἀγλ–, which would not interfere with the following, lexical contonation. Admittedly, we are crossing word boundaries here, but the practice in written poetic texts of preserving accent, despite elision of the final mora, may bespeak a poetic convention that allowed for a licence of this kind. Pronounced as a barytone, this syllable would then in fact be the prominent one. Another exception occurs at the end of the final antistrophe (line 109), where the period resolves with a word accented on the antepenult rather than the ultima. The muted cadence here makes good musical sense, however: it can be understood as a deferral in anticipation of the masculine cadence to come at the end of the following epode, which is the conclusion of the whole composition.

Barker writes convincingly that there were significant extra-textual elements in the musical performance of lyric:

the accompaniment was not conceived as an integral part of the composition as such, but as part of what is added to it in a performance … [T]his sharp demarcation between the composition and the additional resources and techniques required for its effective performance is common in Greek writings, and is treated as clear and fundamental.[6]

He finds

grounds for supposing that accompanying concords and discords, fragmentations and integrations, had a substantial musical role, not merely a dec-

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[6]   Andrew Barker, '*Heterophonia* and *Poikilia*: Accompaniments to Greek Melody', in Bruno Gentili and Franco Perusino (eds.), *Mousike: Metrica, ritmica e musica greca in memoria di Giovanni Comotti*, Pisa and Rome: Istituti Editoriali E Poligrafici Internazioinali, 1995, 57.

orative one. That this role was primarily associated with the articulation and emphasis of rhythm seems strongly indicated, though many details remain to be clarified.[7]

The fact of this integral and yet extra-textual dimension to lyric performance must give us pause. And yet we should also tack towards the Platonic call for a subordination of music to word. In the pattern of strophic terminations in *Olympian* 1, we find something considerably less abstract than 'fragmentation and integration'. Despite our position in space and time, we are in the quite remarkable position of being able to criticize musical settings that would somehow mute or distort the definitive rhythmic pattern created by the words in the last lines of the strophes and antistrophes of *Olympian* 1, or any melodies that would mask their accentual rhymes. From the Platonic camp, we can call such settings 'bad'.

C. THREE PRINCIPLES

It remains to try to articulate a few principles for the analysis of lyric composition. These must necessarily be tentative, given the infancy of the approach, both in terms of interpreting metrical schemata as choreography, and in applying the new theory of the accent. But I do believe that this combined approach, through rhythm and harmony as the constituents of χορεία, carries with it the promise that one day the musical dimension of Greek verse will be a fundamental constituent in the reading of a poem, and no longer one of its epiphenomenal mysteries.

I suggest three principles or guidelines for the reading of Greek lyric verse:

1. 'one syllable one step'
2. the dactyl as the fundamental element of all lyric rhythm
3. the accentual determination of ictus.

[7] Ibid.

1. One syllable one step

The principle of 'one syllable one step' says that for each syllable, there would have been a shift of weight, from the right foot to the left or the left foot to the right. William Mullen presents a balanced view:

The premise without which no further deductions are possible, of course, is that the meter of the words and the figures of the dance flow from the same rhythm. This need not mean anything so literal as that there was one motion of the foot for every syllable of the language. Indeed, the art of the choreographer must have involved, among other things, some skill in varying the ways the different parts of the body realized the meter from phrase to phrase and stanza to stanza. Those are refinements of the choric art of the Greeks which have vanished as completely as the musical accompaniment ... But underlying all the refinements it must always have been the case that the dance was blocked out by the same units of composition that shaped the words, and that ultimately the same unifying rhythm was flowing from the brains of the dancers into their voices and muscles and thence out to the eyes and ears of everyone else present. The notion of any poet fitting words into the extraordinarily demanding patterns of the Greek choral meters and then throwing them away by arranging a choreography completely unrelated to them will not stand up to examination.[8]

The problem is, the classical tradition has been making an equally unthinkable assumption: that a lyric poet, who was called a chorus-teacher, and who had actually taken all that trouble to fit his words into a sequence of dance steps or 'feet', would throw away his choreography. This is the assumption of a vanished harmony and an ephemeral dance, which have come to form a romantic and even mystical penumbra to the poetic λόγος as it is apprehended today.

If each syllable of text corresponded to a single step of the foot, however, the written words of a choral ode become a rather straightforward outline for the progression of a round dance. For a dancer in an Aeschylean chorus, who knew the native accents, the sequence of words should have been immediately interpretable as dance and harmony, if the simple feet into which the syllables grouped themselves represented the basic folk dance steps that he had grown up with. For him, such a sequence of words (or strictly, syllables) would

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[8] Mullen, *Choreia: Pindar and Dance*, 90–1.

in fact have been a choreographic notation, which he and his lay-men's chorus could readily understand—a far cry from the literary text, in respect of which there is no reason to suspect that he would have found Aeschylus' usage and meaning any less violent or extra-ordinary than we do. The formula 'one syllable one step' is a ready means of eliminating the paradigm of the marble text, weathered of its original hues and religious power, and admired for a spurious purity or humanism; and of replacing it with the paradigm of a liturgy or a musical score. We should also thereby eliminate the paradigm of a literate poet and composer of music and producer of theatre, who is supposed to have been utterly careless as a credited author about the recording of his performance; and replace it with that of a poet who has left us not with poetry, so much as written instructions for the realization of poetry. (The possible re-setting of old lyrics in Plato's time should not indicate a lack of choreographic and harmonic information in the transmitted texts, but rather a desire to 'modernize' these elements in the new, florid styles.)

But the formula may still be false. In modern Greek folk dance—although not in the dactylic forms which carry the ancient pedi-gree—a quantity in the rhythm may be marked by a tap or a gesture of the free foot, or a hop on the weighted foot, rather than the shift of weight from one foot to the other. There is no reputable way to be dogmatic about 'one syllable one step' as applied to ancient lyric. But it does seem to be the most straightforward way to interpret Plato's testimony that the rhythm used to follow the word. For the first time we could see how the term 'foot', referring to a peculiar sequence or movement of steps, came to be applied in a linguistic context without any felt equivocation. There was clearly an identity between the quantitative structure of lyric verse and that of the dance. This is why there came to be strict conventions in lyric about the determin-ation of syllabic quantity (i.e. long by nature, long by position, doubtful, etc.), which allow a sequence of syllables to be read off as a quantitative rhythmic pattern. But the use of the term makes it equally clear that the identity extended beyond some abstract pattern of quantity in the choreography to the most basic dance patterns, the 'feet' themselves. (This would be true whether or not the perform-ance of the basic metrical feet involved a shift of weight on the physical feet for each quantity.) For someone who could analyse an

ancient poem into what he called, literally, 'feet', the written record must have been both a literary text and a choreographic scheme without equivocation. For all that the foot had become an abstraction for the metricians of late antiquity, and remains one for the moderns, there must once have been a concrete sense to account for the original use of the term in the analysis of verse.

This identity is in contrast with a kind of parallelism in epic, where the syllable count varies in relation to a fixed dance, attested to have contained seventeen elements. While there can be spondaic substitution in the epic accompaniment, and even the metrical lengthening or shortening of a phonological quantity, lyric dactyls tend to remain pristine. This is because the lyric dance is not based on a fixed and known pattern; rather, an original sequence of feet emerges from the syllables themselves, and if a dancer is to know from the text that he should step out a dactyl, the syllables themselves must 'code' for it. That is, in the absence of a known dance pattern, the dancer must depend upon phonology for his quantities, and the lyric poet assists by supplying phonological dactyls. (To be sure, the 'chorus-teacher' himself could have cleared up any ambiguities; but some of Pindar's poems seem to present themselves as being delivered to a venue without the presence of the poet.) The registration of resolution and substitution, *as such*, depends upon there being a rhythmic pattern in the consciousness independent of the rhythm being actually generated by the syllables performed. Hence if these were to occur in lyric, with the uniqueness of its patterns, it could only be in the antistrophe or a repeated epode, composed to a pattern already established by the dancing of a strophe or first epode. It is possible that such resolutions and substitutions do occur. In the highly dactylic (at times even hexametric) first system of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, for example, editors sometimes 'correct' the manuscripts' spondaic ending δημιοπληθῆ in the antistrophe with the dactylic δημιοπληθέα, with no authority except the desire to make it respond to καὶ χερὶ πράκτορι in the strophe (111, 129). Perhaps in a dactylic environment, where the chorus may well have 'quoted' the συρτός movement, Aeschylus felt the call for a spondaic substitution. But lyric dactyls in general tend to stay unresolved and unsubstituted for.

The same goes for lyric iambs, trochees, and anapaests, in relation to their non-lyric counterparts. These latter, to be found in the stichic

Table 8.2.   Partial tabulation of tendencies in epic, stichic, and lyric

	Epic	Stichic	Lyric
Metri gratia	X		
Length by nature or position only		X	X
Resolution and/or substitution	X	X	

forms such as the trimeter and tetrameter, and non-lyric anapaests, form a middle category between those of epic and lyric, which observes the phonological rules of quantity—there is no merely metrical lengthening or shortening in these forms—but which allows for resolution and substitution in the relation between the quantities of the feet and those of the syllabic train. A partial tabulation of the tendencies is given in Table 8.2.

There could not have been *more* than one step per syllable in lyric. While this phenomenon occurs naturally in the weak part of the foot in epic dactyls and non-lyric anapaests, in the lyric context the florid extension of a syllable over several distinct quantities was recognized, and lampooned, as the innovation of Euripides. Hence this option can be eliminated as a basis for most lyric choreography. The other option remains, however: several syllables to a step. The viability of this formula depends upon one's assessment of the question of the orchestic reality of resolved feet. The resolution of a longum is a genuine vocal phenomenon in stichic verse forms such as the trimeter and tetrameter; and there is no doubt, at least in the case of the tetrameter, that these stichic forms were sometimes danced as they were recited (see Aristotle's *Poetics* 1449ᵃ23). It may therefore be the case in lyric as well, that while the dancers' feet stepped out, say, a trochee, long–short, or a trochaic run, the voice could syncopate its accompaniment with a sequence of three short syllables appropriately stressed. The problem with resolution, however, is that it suggests a priority of the dance over the word, in that the feet (or metra) must represent the invariant components and structural elements of the dance, against which the syllabic train is free, within limits, to be resolved. This is properly the situation of stichic verse forms. If in lyric, however, the dance is truly to follow the word, three short syllables must entail a different physical movement than a long and a short.

It may be objected that dancing to sequences of short syllables would have been awkward or silly-looking, bursts of foot speed in the dignified procession of the chorus; but our sense of taste in such matters is due to a cultural habituation. In the eighth periods (as printed by Snell) of the strophic stanzas of *Olympian* 1, there is an opening sequence of seven short syllables. The first six of these are usually interpreted as a resolved iambic metron. In three of the eight such sequences, however, the word ταχύς ('quick') appears in some form (ταχύποτμον, ταχυτάτων, ταχυτάς). Is this a coincidence? Or might the quickness of movement in seven short steps, rather than iambs, be an actuality of the poem's envisioned performance; in each case differently, and perhaps with a dignity peculiar to χορεία, might the movement be sustaining the sense?

When it comes to orchestic conventions, it must be admitted that we are dealing with a lost world. There is ample (but late) evidence that in the strophe the dancers circled in one direction, in the antistrophe in the other direction, and in the epode that they came to a stand.[9] (More later on the meaning of 'stand'.) Perhaps each of these movements used to begin on the right foot, regardless of the dancers' position at the end of the previous stanza. Or perhaps the antistrophe, turning in the opposite direction, would customarily begin on the left foot, whether or not the strophe ended on the right. If we accept one syllable one step, on the other hand, we should advocate a continuous movement through the transitions. The situation is not totally desperate of judgement. Pindar's vivid use of *enjambement*, for example, seems strongly to suggest that there was a continuity between the stanzas, without a pause to shift weight. While such a pause is essential to the effect of *enjambement* in stichic verse, in lyric the reversal or cessation of motion should itself have been a powerful bridge for composer and audience alike. The effect is still striking in the literary text. Thought and movement seem in the middle of their disclosure to turn, as it were, on a dime.

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[9] See Scholia collected in Otto Crusius, 'Stesichoros und die Epodische Composition in der Griechischen Lyrik', in *Commentationes philologae quibus Ottoni Ribbeckio*, Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1888, 10–11; most of them translated by Mullen, *Choreia: Pindar and Dance*, 225–8.

If there were one syllable to a step, and each step involved a shift of weight from one foot to the other, some important corollaries follow. If it was a kind of convention, for example, that an ode should begin and end on the right foot, we should expect that the total number of syllables in a particular composition would be odd. This runs directly counter to the traditional theory of strophic response, which entails that the total number be even. (Although where the systems include epodes, an odd number of triads could turn out under the traditional theory to have an odd number of syllables.) Editors would have to consider whether a proposed emendation affected the total number of syllables. In *Olympian* 1, for example, which has an even number of triads, Byzantine editors have added a $τί$ to the text of strophe $Γ$, in order to make it respond metrically with all the other stanzas, according to their theory of strophic response. But perhaps the 'missing' syllable was in reality Pindar's contrivance for having the dancers' movement both begin and end on the right foot. According to the doctrine of one syllable one step, the first two epodes would each end on the left foot. The two epodes following the missing syllable, however, would each have to end on the right foot. That this was in fact the case is suggested by the accentuation, which does not match up in the resolutions of the epodes as it does in the strophes. Whereas the first two epodes each resolve with a feminine cadence (barytone on the penult), the final two resolve with a masculine cadence. In other words, while the first two might have ended physically on the left foot, and the last two on the right, all four—the ends of the epodes of all the triads—would have cadenced harmonically on the right. The whole scheme envisioned here, based on one syllable one step, and interweaving the auspicious foot, the ictus of the step, and the stress of the voice, depends upon the missing syllable staying missing. It would seem to be judicious to examine all such textual emendations in lyric which have been made 'for the sake of the metre', in relation to a syllable count and to the accentual patterns, if in fact there is a case for the right-foot cadence as an aesthetic, cultural, or even religious desideratum.

In several instances, the phenomenon of the cadence or $κατάληξις$ in Greek verse forms seems to involve the docking of a quantity. In each of these cases, as perhaps in the sum of *Olympian* 1, the lost quantity results in an odd number of steps instead of an even. The

dactylic hexameter and trochaic tetrameter catalectic are stichic forms, not likely to be covered by the one syllable one step rule. I have interpreted spondaic substitution in the former, and should interpret the resolution of a longum in the latter, as reflecting the syncopation of the linguistic rhythm with a fixed sequence of dance steps. In these cases it is the dance sequences that always have an odd number of quantities, so that each hexameter or tetrameter period would begin and end on the right foot. In lyric, the pherecratean with its odd number of quantities is the catalectic form of the glyconic, with its even count. A sequence of glyconics would succeed one to the other, beginning on the right foot and ending on the left; while the pherecratean would begin but also cadence on the right, bringing the movement and the sense of the whole sequence to a resolution.

Is it too much to ask of the ancient lyric poets, amongst whom were craftsmen of the word to rival any produced in later ages, that they should worry in their poetizing about such things as right-foot cadences? One should have thought so. And yet consider this poem of Pratinas of Phlius, the early fifth-century tragedian, preserved in Athenaeus:

What is this hubbub? What are these dances? What loud-clattering arrogance has come upon the Dionysian altar? Mine, mine is Bromios: it is I who must cry aloud, I who must make a clatter as I run across the mountains with the Naiads, uttering like a swan a dapple-feathered melody. It is song that the Muse made queen. Let the *aulos* dance after it, since it is a servant: it should be content to be commander only in the revel and the fist-fights of young drunks quarrelling at the door. Batter the one that has a mottled toad's breath! Burn that spittle-wasting reed with its deep-chattering mouth and its step that wrecks tune and rhythm ($\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\mu\epsilon\lambda o\rho\upsilon\theta\mu o\beta\acute\alpha\tau\alpha\nu$), a menial whose body is formed with a drill. Look and see! This is the tossing of right hand and foot that is yours, dithyramb-triumphing, ivy-wreathed lord! Listen to my Dorian dance and song.[10]   (*Poetae Melici Graeci* 708)

Pratinus long anticipates Plato in his complaint about the subversion of the song by the music of the flute: it is the song ($\dot\alpha o\iota\delta\acute\alpha$) that ought to lead, for it is 'song that the Muse ($\Pi\iota\epsilon\rho\acute\iota\varsigma$) made queen'. But in his elevation of Dionysiac song-craft over the disorderly pleasures

[10] Tr. Barker, in Steven H. Lonsdale, *Dance and Ritual Play in Greek Religion*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993, 90.

of the flute, the poet directs our attention thus: 'Look and see! This is the tossing of the right hand and foot that is yours, dithyramb-triumphing ivy-wreathed lord! Listen to my Dorian χορεία.' Look *and* listen, the poet says. The Dorian song is queen, but it is reinforced by a *right* use of the *right* foot. Hence the change in the poet's diction: ἀοιδά becomes χορεία. The way that a poet could control the dance through a written text, even to the extent of controlling the pregnant conjunction of right footfall and verbal cadence, is to achieve as close an identification as possible between the sequence of syllables and the sequence of steps. If we assume a shift from one leg to the other on each syllable, we need only avoid resolution and substitution in the metrical feet, and the desired correspondence is achieved. Hence we have generated what has been observed to be the characteristic ethos of lyric metrics, as opposed to stichic metrics, out of a desire to produce a text which is in control of the dance, and which would make a dancer more-or-less immune to the influence of *aulos*-players and other improvisers, if he should only *listen* to it. The syllables of the text, stressed and unstressed, would coordinate themselves as he uttered them with the steps of his feet. The sensual awareness required of the dancer, combined in this case with a certain sensual abandon, would indeed be worthy of the god. Dionysiac χορεία, in Pratinas' prescription, appears to embody a dialectic of frenzy and control, whose aptest symbol, perhaps, is a verbal right-foot cadence.

If one accepts one syllable one step as a working hypothesis for lyric, an extreme conservatism must apply to the reading of manuscripts, in order that late, abstract theories of strophic response do not lead to emendation on the grounds of a perceived unmetricality, and so to a distortion of the syllable count. What can emerge from this approach is the whole panoply of disagreement and agreement in χορεία: not just stressing the arsis, but deceptive cadences, and left-foot cadences; not just stressing the thesis, but right-foot cadences, perhaps the ultimate resolutions in the choral web. To assume one syllable one step for lyric is the only way to recover the dance from the words, because it turns the sequence of syllabic quantities into a choreography. That it is the *only* way, regardless of whether it is the right way, is small comfort to a truth-seeker. But perhaps the economy of expression that this assumption implies, where the lyric texts

preserve not just words but χορεία, was all one with the imagination of the culture and the poets who produced them.

2. Dactyl and cretic

A second working hypothesis is that the dactyl is the fundamental element of all lyric rhythm. If the dactyl is considered in its orchestic reality, a fairly straightforward mechanistic account emerges which promises to explain in a concrete way the multiplicity of metrical patterns in Greek lyric. The practical question to ask is how does one bring a sequence of travelling dactyls to a physical cadence? A sequence of dactyls is a continuous, fluid movement, the round dance equivalent of a walk, with succeeding theses trodden by alternate feet. It has no natural termination (other than fatigue): a left-foot longum succeeds a right, and a right a left. The way to break the alternation is to have succeeding longs trodden on the same foot. This is accomplished by means of a cretic. (A corresponding function is performed by a bacchius after a sequence of anapaests, which does not break the alternation but certainly breaks the stride.) The cretic can therefore serve as the cadence to a sequence of dactyls: it is the minimal form of the catalectic step, the rhythm which can bring a sense of closure to a flowing dactylic alternation. (Contrast the usual trochee at the end of a hexameter, which seems to 'bounce forward' to the next line.) In the 'Ode to Man' from Sophocles' *Antigone*, for example, there is in the eighth and ninth of the ten periods of the first strophe and antistrophe (as printed by Lloyd-Jones and Wilson) a sequence of seven straight dactyls, which is broken by a single cretic (Fig. 8.1). The notions of ploughing and yoking that correspond here at the respective periods of the first system may have been mimed in the dactylic run by the dancers' gestures, or σχήματα. The first case is striking in its use of ἔτος, a word which is of the type that can be either oxytone or barytone. In this line it is made to be both in close proximity, oxytone on the penult in the arsis of a dactyl, but barytone on the ultima in the cretic before a pause. In both stanzas the cretic serves abruptly to slow the movement down, and to convert the rhythm from strongly descending to ascending. In the strophe the tenth (and final) period languishes on the three long syllables of

ἄφθιτον ἀκαμάταν ἀποτρύεται,   8 strophe A

ἰλλομένων ἀρότρων ἔτος εἰς ἔτος,   9

ἱππείῳ γένει πολεύων.

—∪∪ —∪∪ —∪∪ —∪∪

—∪∪ —∪∪ —∪∪ —∪—

——— ∪— ∪— ×

θηρὸς ὀρεσσιβάτα, λασιαύχενά θ'   antistrophe A

ἵππον ὀχμάζεται ἀμφὶ λόφον ζυγῷ

οὔρειόν τ' ἀκμῆτα ταῦρον.
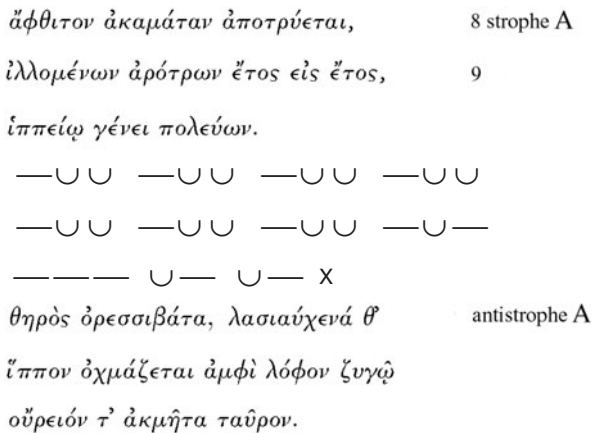
Figure 8.1   Sophocles, *Antigone* 339–41, 350–2

ἱππείῳ, stressed on the final, as a precursor to the solid masculine cadence on πολεύων (a natural bacchius). In the antistrophe the final period modulates back to a descending, feminine cadence on ταῦρον, apparently to achieve a right-foot cadence where the last syllable of the system belongs to the left foot.

The cretic κατάληξις is often expanded by means of a transitional step and another cretic, which create the sequence now known simply as E: —∪— × —∪—, epitrite plus cretic. This movement allows for an emphatic cadence on one foot, seeing as the four longs belong to the same leg; the fourth step, however, which is anceps, can make for significant variety—an opposite foot bacchius—when it is stressed. The natural relation between dactyl and cretic, broadly as passage and cadence, descending and ascending, becomes formalized in the so-called dactylo-epitrite metre. Here the dactyls occur in a relatively self-contained unit, the hemiepes (or D), which is often separated from the E sequence by a transitional quantity. (This transitional step insures that the opening and closing longs of the hemiepes, as well as the four longs of the catalectic sequence, are trodden on the leading foot.) The hemiepes is self-contained in the sense that its dactyls are rounded with a longum, and like the enoplion, it has a perceptible rhythmic unity derived from the phrasings of the hexameter and the elegiac couplet. In this latter, the

hemiepes itself has the quality of a cadence. Given that the E sequence also has a certain rhythmic vitality, centered on the anceps, it is possible to see how the two segments could begin to gain a limited autonomy. In the hands of a Pindar, the E need not always follow as a cadence to the D. It can even begin an ode, as in the memorable opening to *Pythian* 1. This is a development that can no doubt be paralleled in the relation between the dances of folk and court and the dance forms of classical music. The natural, physical dynamic that subsists between dactyl and cretic, expanded but still vivid in the long 'sentences' of standard dactylo-epitrite, becomes subsumed in Pindar within the expressive framework of a sophisticated and original art rhythm. In *Pythian* 1, the poet and his audience have reached an ultimate stage where the ordinary rhythmic logic can be reversed to release new effects.

Aristotle speaks of the descending and ascending paeon, *bum badada* and *badada dum*, as suitable respectively for the beginnings and endings of speeches (*Rhetoric* 1409ᵃ). Even non-Americans can recognize the descending solemnity of Lincoln's 'Foúr score and séven years ago', that culminates in the ascending paeon, 'shall not pérish from the eárth'. But consider that most famous of ascending paeons, *badada dum*, from the opening of Beethoven's fifth. This opening phrase has a naturally climactic quality. That is to say, some part of the jarring power of this unforgettable opening to the fifth Symphony has to do with its beginning with a climactic rhythm. Beethoven has reversed rhythmic logic to particularly memorable effect; this move is comparable to that in the opening of *Pythian* 1.

I do not here broach the question of the meaning of this reversal in Pindar, or the meaning of his poem. This ode *ends* with a priamel; perhaps a formal 'upside-downness' on several levels is an important entry point to its meaning. But it should be clear that to approach the interpretation of this poem and its tradition purely dictionally, without considering this first and opening question that it raises musically, is something like studying opera via the libretto. One might as well be reading Shakespeare, or Lincoln, in French prose.

The dactyl is also the basis of the so-called Ionic rhythm. The choriamb (— ∪ ∪ —), I would suggest, is Hephaestion's invention, one of the first spurious creatures of textual, abstract metrics.

A dactyl is very likely to be marked off by a following longum; this would be why the choriamb *seems* to appear all over metrical schemata, including in so-called Aeolic rhythms, when these are viewed merely as patterns of signs rather than as a choreography. The Ionic choriamb seems in fact to be a kind of processional dactyl, where the extra quantity eliminates the alternation of the legs and allows each metron to begin on the leading foot. The stately quality of the syllabic verse would thereby be a reflex of the stately step. The term choriamb suggests, on the other hand, a dynamic foot which turns in mid-step from trochee (choree) to iamb, descending to ascending. We should expect to find what is not specially there in Ionic: a stressed syllable both at the foot's initial and final longum. A foot with two theses *does* contain an inherent potential to change the impetus of its stress. What we find, however, is often a smooth modulation over several metra into an anapaestic style of rhythm, also with an extra step, which results in a natural ascending cadence. In anaclastic Ionic and in the Anacreontic, as well as Ionic a minore, this cadence takes the customary form of the rising bacchius. Were the sequence — ∪ ∪ — truly a trochee and an iamb, we might expect a corresponding ascending–descending form ∪ — — ∪; instead we get ∪ ∪ — —, which rather suggests that the truth about the Ionic rhythm is that it arises out of a modulation between a 'processional' dactylic step and an anapaestic counterpart.

When we come to Aeolic metres, which used more usefully to be called logaoedic, we reach the furthest limit, as I see it, of the control of the word over the dance. The rhythmic interchange between dactyl and epitrite possesses an independent impetus that is reminiscent of the fully independent rhythm of the Muses' hexameter. Aeolic rhythms can seem almost free-form by contrast; the flexibility of their patterns accommodates the trochaic and iambic cadences of speech. This is not at all to say that Aeolic rhythms are speech-like, nor even that they are more speech-like than dactylo-epitrite. *Olympian* 1 is a profusion of song. Nor is it to say that the rhythms are casual, despite an initial impression of formlessness: if you are going to compose a period beginning with seven short syllables, you impose upon yourself the severest possible constraints when it comes to the responding stanzas (in *Olympian* 1 there are seven to come!). George Thomson has argued cogently for an underlying

pattern of significant rhythm in this poem.[11] The illusion created by Pindar is that of a natural, artless rhythm, which seems to flow completely and, as it were, spontaneously at the behest of the words.

At the heart even of logaoedic rhythm, however, is still the dactyl. Occurring often singly and isolated in the poetic period, it seems almost a concession to the dancer and the dance. The invariant element of the glyconic is a dactyl immediately stopped before it can get started, —∪∪—∪—, by a cretic. The dynamic relation between these two feet seems to be entombed within the larger rhythmic life of the sentence, which depends more on the Aeolic base with its ancipitia, or the various internal and external expansions (which can sometimes be dactylic), or finally on the relation of the glyconic itself to the catalectic pherecratean. In the pherecratean, the dactyl is 'cut off' not by a cretic but by a spondee or trochee, resulting in a cadence that recalls the resolution of the hexameter.

West has compared the glyconic to the close of Indian gayatri verse:[12]

$$\text{X X X X C} - \text{C} - \text{ gayatri verse}$$

$$\text{X X} - \text{C C} - \text{C} - \text{ glyconic}$$

Here is another lesson in the pitfalls of comparative metrics. Apart from the fact that the glyconic in its very nature is not a metre with a close—it depends upon the pherecratean for a cadence—and hence does *not* constitute the right comparison—the resemblance is entirely mathematical! One's eye is drawn to the last four symbols in each line. They are identical. But look again at that glyconic: the essential point of difference is that *it* contains (*must* contain) a dactyl. This suggests that a concrete and distinctive dance step determines the form of the glyconic. It is not a bunch of stuff prior to an iambic punch. That invariant close in the Greek case is a dactyl abutted by a cretic, *descending modulating to ascending*. The gayatri verse ends in simple ascending iambic. The rhythms do *not* in the least resemble each other. They are as different as can be in the realm of the realities

[11] George Thomson, *Greek Lyric Metre*, Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons (1st edn., Cambridge University Press), 1961, 70–80.

[12] After M. L. West, 'Indo-European Metre', *Glotta*, 51 (1973), 161–87.

of rhythm and rhythmic expression: West is comparing two metrical patterns without any thought to their rhythms.

The rhythmic and even verbal similarity of certain Aeolic phrases to elements of the hexameter is the basis for Nagy's *derivation* of the epic hexameter from an expanded pherecratean.[13] On my understanding, the Aeolics are precisely those lyric metres that are furthest removed from the dactylic parent. Why is it that aspects of Aeolic phraseology recall aspects of hexameter phraseology? Surely we pay too high a price in inverting the attested history. The Aeolic poetry comes later, and one ought to consider the realities of composing within a musical tradition—of being Wagner after Beethoven, or Beethoven after Mozart, or Mozart after Bach—as one attempts to understand the situation of a Sappho or an Alcaeus. Homer was a Titan even in this company, and while philosophers such as Empedocles and Parmenides strode heavy-handedly into hexameter composition (and competition with the past), and the elegiac form still had plenty of sap in it, the genuinely musical successors to Homer, the true innovators, must have found or created new conditions from which to produce a new music. I point to a compositional revolution, where the poet became lord of the dance, and the word became master of rhythm. Precisely in such a situation does Greek choral metre become for the first time linguistic, or at least subservient to language, and rhythm begins more and more to flow from the words themselves. *Partial* quotation in word, rhythm and melody, which is documented by Nagy in the case of Sappho and Homer,[14] is not evidence of an integrity to the parts *prior to the original*, as is assumed in the concept of a traditional formula; partial quotation can be paralleled in other cases of musical revolution through history, whether we look to Renaissance polyphony in relation to plainsong, or to a bebop version of Cole Porter. Such quotation, nested within a new or merely idiosyncratic order, can help persuade an audience to get its bearings, and get hip. Snippets of hexameter phrasing in the mix give the verse legitimacy, by connecting the audience to its traditional music—at the very same time that

[13] See previous discussion, Ch. 5 section C.
[14] See Nagy, *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter*, 118–39.

the chorus seeks a new legitimacy in moving for the first time not so much to dactyls but to the rhythms of natural language.

In modern music and musical accompaniment, excitement, fear, and emotional agitation are evoked or mimicked by the use of climactic rhythms, whose finality and cadence-like quality are negated by their repetition, and are often offset by dissonance in the harmony. A similar musical sensibility may lie behind the poetic and dramatic deployment of so-called dochmiac rhythms, which are based on cretics and bachii, the typical climactic feet of a lyric train. A sequence of climax upon climax tends to increase rather than resolve tension, and this is probably what drew composers, particularly dramatists, to a rhythm based on these feet. The paeons (— ∪∪∪ and ∪∪∪ —) that occur in these sequences are sometimes described as resolved cretics and bachii, but it may be that these are really a kind of skewed dactyls and anapaests. The extra short would give them a characteristic lurch. My first teacher in metrics (Elliott Zuckerman) used to accompany college waltz parties on the piano, and he would occasionally satisfy some perverse and wilful part of his soul by throwing in an extra and unexpected tail to the train of a famous waltz melody. Anyone who has seen the effect of such extra beats, upon dancers who are caught up in the flow of a familiar pattern, would know the lurch as a real, physical phenomenon that disquiets the foot, the stomach, and the head balancing above. Possibly the dochmiac had a similar effect—calculated in advance—upon performer and spectator.

The solid principle underlying this analysis is that it is possible to reconstruct the metres of Greek lyric in terms of the simple dynamics of folk dance steps. Dactyls and trochees are living presences today in dances that are the direct descendants, perhaps the re-enactments, of the orchestras of the ancient world. In the re-enactment of music—as against the preservation of texts, and the transmission of languages— time itself stands still. There may therefore be a future for the science of ancient Greek metrics in the analysis of data from modern folk dance. What must remain speculative for now is my hypothesis about the seminal relationship between the dactyl and the cretic. I have suggested that all the complexities of Greek lyric, the multiplicities of form, depend ultimately upon the structures created as solutions to this question: how can one bring a dactylic (or anapaestic) run—a

Greek round dance—to a rhythmic resolution? The epic hexameter, the dance of the Muses, represents only the first and most open-ended answer to this question. The greater physical and aural climax of the cretic and the bacchius and their expansions can be seen to be called forth by the intensity and the closure required of the round by the lyric poet and his mastery.

As we have noted, the long–short–short rhythm and step is the fundamental measure of the modern συρτός, the travelling step which carries the dancer round the circle. The rhythm appears also in another characteristic guise, a kind of stepping in place, a form of which occurs in the retrogression of the συρτός. This 'standing' dactyl, a rhythmic shifting from foot to foot without progression in the round, may well have been the basic element of the epode. The late testimony is unanimous that in the epode, the dancers came to a standstill. The fact remains, however, that epodic rhythms are every bit as orchestic as strophic rhythms; whereas a chorus come literally to a standstill might be expected to declaim in a more speech-like style. The existence of a 'standing' dactyl could help resolve the issue. It may be objected that the sight of a chorus tripping in place, as it were, for the length of an epode, would detract from the dignity of lyric expression. Such an objection should probably extend, however, to the whole concept of χορεία.

In his brilliant chapter on the Pindaric triad, Mullen has demonstrated with considerable subtlety how interwoven and interdependent, in the moment of 'epodic arrest', are the choreography, the theme, and the rhetorical stance.[15] For all that the verse continues to move, and so also (presumably) the feet, the epodic moment is a cessation of motion; the dancers turn to face the god in their midst. It is the time also to face the transience and mortality of man, before the altar of the immortal god. Whereas the circling is a journey, in space and in narrative, the epode is a destiny, a place of arrival and departure, τέλος and ἀρχή. As such it becomes thematic in the unfolding progression of the lyric, so that throughout there is a fusion of the dance and the sense.

Mullen makes this essential observation, for those who are interested in the development of drama out of lyric:

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[15] Mullen, *Choreia: Pindar and Dance*, 90–142, *passim*.

Given the potential of epodic arrest for dramatic effect, it should not be surprising to discover that virtually every speech of a god or a hero in the epinicians either occurs entirely within an epode or is so enjambed that its climactic moment occurs there. As the dancers cease from defining a moving path and suddenly create instead a stationary space, they 'set the stage' for the moment of dramatic speech in which the action comes to its crisis and resolution.[16]

It is not clear whether Mullen means to make the implication, but surely it is tempting to see the development of drama itself out of lyric as an expansion and development of the inherently dramatic quality of the epode. In tragedy as well as in Pindar's epinicians, the strophe and antistrophe set the stage for dramatic speech. Whereas in lyric this speech was rendered by the whole chorus in an orchestic rhythm, in drama the chorus literally stood still, while in its early stages a single chorister may have stood forth at its focus—replacing, perhaps, the altar—and impersonated the mythic protagonist, declaiming his momentous utterance in a more speech-like (or speakable), stichic rhythm. (The rhythm was at first in the trochaic tetrameter, a dance metre according to Aristotle, but afterwards, and more familiarly, in the iambic trimeter.) In this way we can see how it is that there could have been a transitional stage between lyric and drama, with only one actor. Aristotle testifies to such a stage, and ascribes to Aeschylus the innovation of introducing a second actor; presumably this allowed the poet to render the critical encounters of the myth into dialogue, thereby to break the spell of the epodic moment, in its monologic solemnity, and to create for the first time (in choral poetry at any rate) the spell of drama. We can also now account for the comparative rarity of the epode in tragic lyrics: it had been supplanted by the dramatic dialogue, for which the lyric element continued in various ways to set the stage.

The unique quality and power of this lost aesthetic of the epode have been exposed by Mullen:

Whatever may be the sense of strophe and antistrophe as cosmic revolutions, there is a certain justice in the notion that the epode stands for the stillness of the earth. Whether as a place for narrative of divine favor, for precepts on the limits of mortality, or for confrontation with the dead themselves, the

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[16] Ibid. 134.

epode reminds us that we are earthly beings whose destiny is, at best, to be briefly irradiated by the light from above before passing forever into the soil below. The dancers acknowledge as much when they come to a stand on the patch of earth that has been cleared for their dancing floor. It is by such a stand, if at all, that an axis through our transience can be established.[17]

The only qualification I might suggest to this luminous peroration is that the notion of the 'stand', at least in the lyric context, can have an orchestic interpretation. The survival into modern Greek folk dancing of a stationary movement may be a clue as to why the rhythms of the epode are dance rhythms. Perhaps we may no longer be able to claim, in the case of an epode, that the function of a cretic in relation to a dactyl is to 'rein in a run'. But in these movements in place, there would still be the difference between the alternation of leading legs in dactylic sequences, and the repeated emphasis on one foot in cretic/epitritic sequences. And there may be unexpected clues to the epodic dynamic in still extant folk movements. The fact is that the 'standing' dactyl is so unique a feature of the aesthetic of modern Greek folk dance, as to have earned a name in Europe: the *pas de Grecques*.[18]

3. Accentual determination of ictus

A third and final hypothesis I would suggest for the analysis of lyric, and of Greek poetry in general, is that of the accentual determination of ictus. This is the stage where the new theory of the accent becomes decisive and revelatory, where metre and rhythm are consummated by harmony and become χορεία. It must be remembered that for Plato, rhythm in relation to harmony is a merely analytic term, which abstracts the bodily motions from the living whole composed of both. But the body without a soul is a corpse; there is no real movement there at all. Hence, as a matter of principle, we should expect only a limited view into the musical life of χορεία, into the genuine motion of Greek verse, from metrical analysis alone. And we should expect still less, if anything, from a metrical analysis which

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[17] Ibid. 142.
[18] Petrides, *Greek Dances*, 1–2.

pays no attention to the physical aspects of dance at all, in the manner of the orthodox analyses of the past two thousand years.

It has been observed, most recently by Thomas Cole, that the basic feet seem to come in pairs, where the transfer of a longum from the beginning of one foot to the end, or vice versa, generates the other corresponding foot. This relation holds for trochees and iambs, dactyls and anapaests, cretics and bachii, choriambs and ionics, and can be illustrated for longer sequences (for example, iambo-choriambic and anacreontic).[19] Cole has devised a comprehensive theory of ancient metre based on the ἐπιπλοκή or 'interweave' in a given composition between the corresponding kinds of feet; this interweave can be understood in each case as a modulation between descending and ascending rhythms:

Rhythm is a single fabric in which rise and fall are constantly being inter-woven through a pattern of alternating or cyclic recurrence. A dactylic (iambic, choriambic) movement phase is beginning during the closing portion of each anapestic (trochaic, ionic) phase, and vice versa:

dactyl   dactyl   dactyl

∪ — ∪ ∪ — ∪ ∪ — ∪ ∪ — ∪

  anapest   anapest   anapest
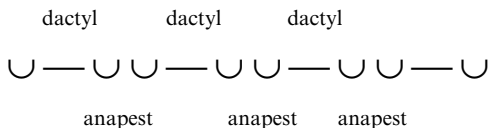
Double shorts and single longs are here conceived as creating by their alternation a movement which can possess shape and form even when it is without internal demarcation—like the perpetual succession of good and evil in men's lives which the word *rythmos* designates when first attested (Archilochus 128.7).[20]

Cole collects pre-Hellenistic evidence that the paired rhythms could sometimes be viewed under one head: in Aristotle, for example, iambic covers iambic and trochaic (although Plato distinguishes them); his paeon is both — ∪∪∪ and ∪∪∪ —. Similarly, Plato defines the dactyl in the *Republic* (400b) only in terms of the equality of its 'up' and 'down' segments, covering either — ∪∪ or ∪∪ —. Cole finds fault with the metrical segmentation of the pattern into iden-

[19] Thomas Cole, *Epiploke*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988, 5.
[20] Ibid. 3–4.

tical units, which requires that the sequence above be conceived as *either* dactylic or anapaestic:

The interwoven segments of epiploke are one possible alternative to this model; another would be to represent rhythm, not as straight movement along a segmented line:

$$— \cup \cup \mid — \cup \cup \mid — \cup \cup \mid — \cup \cup \mid — \ldots$$
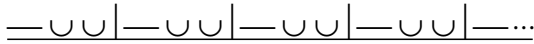
but as cyclic movement along an unsegmented closed curve—the circumference of a clock face, for example, marked with shorts at 12 and 4 and a long at 8. The dactylic day begins at eight and the anapaestic one at noon, which does not prevent the morning, noon and night of the former and the noon, night and morning of the latter from being different, overlapping versions of the same diurnal rhythm—as is the much rarer night, morning and noon produced by 'amphibrachic' ($\cup — \cup$) rising at 4 p.m.

By virtue of its ability to indicate the relationship of cycles and corresponding phrases within cycles without creating demarcation or grouping, such a diagram may well be truer to the early Greek sense of time, whose passage was often felt as a non-linear periodic phenomenon, like the procession of seasons and stars by which it was measured.[21]

It is remarkable that Cole does not ground his view of Greek rhythm upon the attested physical circling of Greek choral performance, which would seem to be the manifest periodic phenomenon underlying the pattern of rhythm, but rather alludes to a perception of the periodicity of time, which is not, after all, peculiar to early Greece or late. That he would neglect the specific evidence on his side in favour of the vague is perhaps a symptom of the abstraction in which theorists of ancient metre have had to work, studying metre without regard to accent and harmony—an approach which would be considered self-contradictory in any other context—and with little concern for the practical implementation or performance of their metrical schemes. Of course it is my claim to have rediscovered the essential harmonic constituent (in the nature of the verbal accent), which combines with metre (interpreted as dance) in χορεία. But one wonders sometimes how much metrics since Hephaestion has ever felt the loss of its musical function and aesthetic context. Turf wars

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[21] Ibid. 4.

between metrists and colometrists are neither inspired by nor have any bearing on the harmony and the dance. They have no bearing on reality at all.

What is novel in Cole's approach is the notion of an undemarcated sequence. Such a notion borders on the self-contradictory—certainly one could not speak of an undemarcated or unsegmented rhythm— but it opens the way to seeing the sequence of longs and shorts not as a rhythm in itself, but as a matrix of potentials which can be realized in various ways as rhythm. The male agent in this fertilization is the vocal accent. To be sure, the dance by itself places constraints on the sequence: the συρτός step can be seen as either dactylic or anapaestic, just as a waltzer as he waltzes will sometimes perceive the 'one' as preceding but sometimes as following the 'two-three'. But the step *cannot* be seen, without some discomfort to the dancers, as amphi-brachic (∪—∪, 'three-*one*-two'). In this sense, the steps of the folk dance make an initial demarcation of the rhythmic potentiality. But just as was observed in the case of the hexameter, it is the accentual harmony that brings definition and consummation.

What emerges is a vigorous dynamism in the push and pull between ascending and descending rhythm. This dynamism is rooted in the natural accentual profile of the language, which the artist turns into music. Some instincts that come from a schooling in abstract metre prove to be valid: every sequence which ends in a long, for example, such as a period ending in a quantitative iamb, spondee, anapaest, cretic, or bacchius, will close with an ascending rhythm, because before a pause every final long syllable in Greek is stressed. But in between here and there, it is the accentual substance of the words, whether oxytone or barytone on ultima, penult, or antepen-ult, which determines the ascent and descent of rhythm and so creates the music, and there is no way to recover this from the sequence of quantities alone.

As we have seen, there are two possible kinds of barytone words in Greek, as determined by the new theory and the recessive accent rules, and hence there are only two main ways of stressing a long metrical thesis. Barytone on the penult, with a short always follow-ing, yields a falling rhythm and a feminine cadence; barytone on the ultima yields an ascending rhythm and a masculine cadence. (Long-final oxytones before a pause, and pyrrhic paroxytones, the

class with a double nature, can also produce an ascending cadence.) While the barytones are the heavy stresses, as their name suggests, and the rhythmic anchors of the series, the oxytone serves up the spice, jazzing up the arsis and propelling the line. A barytone in the arsis, meanwhile, serves as a kind of counterpoint—perhaps a rhythmic kind of dissonance, whose effect in context may be either passing or emphatic. In particular, there is evidence that a masculine cadence on the arsis was felt to be especially disruptive, the epitome of disagreement. The rhythmic life of the tragic iambic trimeter often depends upon a masculine cadence on the third arsis (also called 'second anceps', the fifth syllable of the trimeter's twelve), which both brings the line to a rising pause and compels it back into motion— like the unstable equilibrium of a cadence on the dominant in modern harmony—so that the line seeks to resolve itself with another masculine cadence, but this time in full agreement on the final thesis.

The desire to avoid the disagreement of such a displaced cadence on the fifth arsis (third anceps, syllable nine), immediately before the final resolution, is the precise cause of Porson's bridge.[22] Since a long syllabic termination is nearly always stressed, it cannot occupy this position without upsetting the naturally ascending ictus of the cadence that follows (‐͝——/∪‐͝). Note, however, that it is only the masculine cadence which is forbidden here; a feminine cadence on the penultimate arsis, with barytone on the penult (as for example an aorist infinitive filling the foot), is often to be found. Also to be found in this position is word end after a short syllable (e.g. ἐμπρέποντας αἰθέρι, Aesch. *Ag.* 6). While an exhaustive survey has yet to be done, it appears that the short final syllables placed here, such as the final syllable of ἐμπρέποντας, are never accentually prominent. Hence, just as a rhythmic aesthetic proscribes a feminine cadence in the fourth thesis of the hexameter, a masculine cadence is forbidden in the fifth arsis of the trimeter, and this is how Porson's 'bridge' should be understood in light of the new theory of the accent.

The other modulation characteristic in this metre is that between descending and ascending. The caesura after the fourth arsis (also

22 See Allen, *Accent and Rhythm*, 306.

called 'second breve'—between the seventh and eighth syllables) occurs almost always after a feminine cadence on the third thesis; the caesura after the third arsis (second anceps), meanwhile, which is caused by the central masculine cadence mentioned above, is also sometimes caused by a feminine cadence on the second thesis, producing a short anceps. Each of these rhythms can be observed in the opening of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*. In the opening line, we see a masculine cadence on αἰτῶ in the third arsis:

<div align="center">θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ' ἀπαλλαγὴν πόνων,</div>

In the second line we see another such cadence (ἐτείας) immediately displaced by a feminine cadence on the third thesis (μῆκος):

<div align="center">φρουρᾶς ἐτείας μῆκος, ἦν κοιμώμενος</div>

In the fourth line we see a feminine cadence on the second thesis (κάτοιδα):

<div align="center">ἄστρων κάτοιδα νυκτέρων ὁμήγυριν,</div>

To say merely that all three of these lines observe the first caesura, in the manner of standard metrics, is to say truth, but it is to say nothing definitive about the distinctive rhythm of each line.

Of course, whatever the nature of the central cadence, the iambic line usually resolves on an ascending cadence on the final thesis. But notice that in the last two examples there is a significant variant. κοιμώμενος and ὁμήγυριν are both oxytone on the antepenult, and it is very difficult to interpret such an accentual shape as reinforcing a rising ictus. This shape appears to offer a Greek alternative to masculine and feminine—perhaps a double or weakened feminine, or else simply a dactylic cadence. Whereas an outright feminine or trochaic ending appears to be impossible in the trimeter, the dactylic cadence is very common, and appears to offer the poet the option of a genuinely descending rhythm at the resolution of this most ascending of measures. There is a musical tension felt in this metre between the physical arsis and thesis and the interplay between descending and ascending rhythms, which are determined by the voice in accentuation, but with a superadded variety in falling or rising pitch. These elements combine and interweave in all the music of χορεία,

whether it be performed by a declaiming actor or by the lyric orchestra.

Since in their accents and quantities it is the words that bear the metrical and harmonic properties of verse, as relatively independent features within themselves, it is only through the words that the tensions and resolution of χορεία can be brought to life. The modulation between ascending and descending rhythm, for example, is brought about simply by the juxtaposition of words, in particular by the two kinds of barytone. It is a most striking fact which cannot be revealed by the metre alone that this modulation between rise and fall can turn and return on a dime. It is a constant dynamism. Adjacent feet can bear opposite senses, a situation we first meet in the coda of the hexameter, which is sometimes ‒⏑⏑ | ‒⏑, but at other times, with a feeling that is just as characteristic of the rhythm of the epic, ‒⏑⏑ | ——‒. A cretic by itself can accomplish this change. Even within a single foot, such as ‒⏑⏑, there can be the germ of an ἐπιπλοκή between the 'one two-three' and the 'two-three one'.

There is one nearly unfailing clue to the music from the naked metrical scheme, which is readily illustrated by the trimeter. My third hypothesis (the accentual determination of ictus) could almost be restated; along with one syllable one step, and the structural centrality of the dactyl, we could say: 'where there is anceps, look there for harmonic life.' Anceps is a sign, particularly in the middle of the verse (as in the stichic trimeter or the lyric E sequence) or at the end (as in the hexameter) of an intrinsic harmonic variability, where the accent determines the ictus. To be sure, anceps at the beginning can allow for some creative effects, but this is usually in the nature of an up-beat or 'vamp'. Anceps in the middle or at the end represents a potentiality which, when it is realized, fundamentally determines the run of the line. When there is a feminine cadence on the preceding syllable, the anceps is realized as short. When there is a preceding masculine cadence, the anceps can be either short or long; but when the anceps is realized as long, it is usually itself the place of a masculine cadence. At the end of a line, short anceps nearly always means a feminine cadence, and the choice between ascending and descending resolutions is an inherent dynamism of terminal anceps. That variation or indeterminacy in quantity (anceps) and variation in the accentual pattern should be causally related is a concomitant of

the new theory: it is entirely natural that a linguistic dynamism should be exploited to become a poetic dynamism.

In lyric, the accentual determination can be more radical. Consider those seven short syllables in *Olympian* 1. Thomson has seen in the first instance of these, in strophe *A*, an example of a modulation from descending to ascending by means of resolved feet. Recall that the first six syllables are usually represented as a resolved iambic metron:

$$\text{ὅθεν ὁ πολύφατος ὕμνος ἀμφιβάλλεται}$$

$$\cup\cup\cup \quad \cup\cup\cup \quad \cup - \cup - \quad \cup - \cup -$$

Thomson suggests that the phrase

begins with two tribrachs. Of these the first, ὅθεν ὁ, is so divided as to suggest trochaic, while the second πολύφα, is doubtful, and so prepares the way for the undisguised iambic which follows, and for the rising rhythm which continues to the end of the strophe.[23]

Thomson is right about the descending sense of ὅθεν ὁ, but πολύφατος is an oxytone on the antepenult; it is impossible to see the rhythm of this word as modulating towards ascending, and difficult to see it even as doubtful. As a matter of fact, *every* word in the line has a descending rhythmic pattern, with the final syllable(s) unstressed. (I always mean by ascending and descending rhythms to refer to the pattern of stressed and unstressed, or prominent and non-prominent syllables, regardless of whether a particular stress involves a rising or a falling phonetic pitch.) ἀμφιβάλλεται is particularly striking: its final syllable is naturally short, and unless there was a poetic convention which lengthened it, and shifted the accent accordingly, so as to change the pronunciation of the word in poetic recitation, ἀμφιβάλλεται cannot be seen to suggest or to implement an ascending rhythm. So much for 'undisguised iambic'. That Pindar is after a specific effect is confirmed by some of the other stanzas, where at the corresponding spot (in strophe and antistrophe *Δ*) we find ἐρίζεται and μήδεται. The short final syllable is most evident in the respondent in strophe *B*: εὐνομώτατον, which ends in undisguised dactylic. On the other hand, the remaining stanzas *do* seem to end this period in the ascending

fashion (on φροντίσιν, εἰς ἀκμάν, ἀνέρων ἔθνος, and ἁρμάτων), so that it is not wrong that the metrical scheme should suggest iambic. What is going on here in these lyric iambs is in fact the same variation we saw in the tragic trimeter, eschewing trochaic, but accommodating a dactyl at period end. This is accent determining ictus from a matrix of possibilities.

If we were to revise the metrical scheme, we should print the final syllable in this sequence, and in the standard iambic trimeter, as anceps. In both cases it should be clear that the choral analysis of these words has something to say on all three levels—there are three levels of determinance where the traditional analysis only responds to the first: the *rhythm* of their metre is ascending iambic; their accentual *harmony*, however, can determine a dactylic, descending resolution; and out of the *combination* there arises a dynamic variety in the sense of agreement at period end—accommodating the iamb and the dactyl in this case, but not the disagreeable trochee—which we should call distinctive of the cadences of the word-music and word-dance of χορεία.

As for the initial short syllables, there is no real basis for conceiving of them as forming an iambic metron. They represent a daring indeterminacy, which when realized as harmony and as dance would have been a locus of energy and excitement in the strophic procession. In the other stanzas, we see ÚUUUUUU ‿, UUÚUÚUUU ‿, ÚUUUÚUUU — twice, UUUUÚUUU ‿, UUUUÚUUU —, and even UUUUUUU ‿, where there is no prominent accent on any of the seven shorts (although the voice rises in pitch on the last). The suppression of the accent, which routinely happens in oxytone final words as they link up in a train of thought, would seem to emphasize the word in which the accent is released (in this case, ταχυτάτων). It is hoped that the arrangement of words so as to control the suppression and the release of accents—in which enclitics play a prominent role—will one day be recognized as a seminal feature of Greek style in both verse and prose. A fine example of this occurs in Sophocles' 'Ode to Man' in *Antigone.* There is no completed accentual contonation in the first printed period of the strophe. It is not a coincidence that in the second period, the word upon which the first accent finally falls is ἀνθρώπου.

D. PERIOD AND STROPHE

What is the orchestic relation between period and strophe? What is
the orchestic reality of a period? Despite its name, a period as it
is usually printed could not have been a true circuit or rotation. This
is properly the dimension of the whole strophe. On the other hand,
it is clear that the strophe has rhythmic subdivisions, such as hemi-
epē and glyconics, which are metrically and prosodically marked.
The circuit of the strophe was therefore made up of smaller elements,
runs and cadences within the larger development and cadence of the
total movement. Such 'periods' may perhaps correspond as lyric
versions to the segments of nine and eight, into which the continuous
movement of a hexameter line was perceived to be divided. The
strophes of lyric and drama can be understood as single rounds
which turn in a non-uniform rhythm, speeding up and slowing
down, running and reining themselves in as they proceed. The
effect might have resembled that of the potter test-spinning his
wheel, to which Homer compares the motion of a ring dance of
boys and girls linked wrist to wrist, depicted on the shield of Achilles
(*Iliad* 18.590–606—although the simile may better suit the motion of
the συρτός, which contains actual retrogressions). The dancers on the
shield also resolve into rows, probably by sex. Perhaps such a reso-
lution sometimes also occurred in mid-strophe.

The non-uniform rhythm and speed, together with the kind of
accentual reinforcement observed in the segments of the hexameter,
would have served visibly and audibly to mark off periods, even in a
continuous circling. The current printing practices, which suggest
that periods and strophes have the structure and function of lines
and stanzas, therefore have some validity. Resumptions, runs, and
cadences would have been physically manifested. Hence the semantic
emphases sometimes observed at the beginnings and ends of periods,
and perhaps even the phenomenon of *enjambement* between lines,
could have been physically manifested as well, even if the 'line' were
merely a discontinuity, rather than a reversal or otherwise genuine
'period', in an onward circling.

Isochrony within periods seems necessary from the point of view
of practical performance, but is by no means a demonstrable feature

of strophic composition. On the larger scale, the strophe/antistrophe construct can be conceived as an example of extravagant isochronism, and it is also conceivable, however counter-intuitively to non-Greeks, that it was the only *actual* isochronism in lyric form. In other words, the strophe itself was profoundly free verse, but the antistrophe with its almost exact matching of responsive rhythm seems to have answered the desire for balance created by such assertion and freedom, so that the experience of 'isochronic closure' was suspended across the length of a system, until the audience could finally say 'aah' at the end of the antistrophe. Modern Greek folk dance is notorious for the number of beats it can allow in a measure. Whereas the various western time signatures and dance measures can usually be reduced to duple or triple time, or a combination of the two, an expert in the field reports that he has found genuinely distinct, non-reducible measures in extant Greek folk dance for all numbers *up to and including thirty-five.*[24] In other words, modern Greek dancers are apparently so brought up and habituated that they can count and dance up to thirty-five distinct beats before repeating a metrical pattern—before coming to the next downbeat! Sir Richard Jebb's metrical schemes for Sophocles, which lengthen some longs for the sake of equalizing rhythm at the level of the period, and elsewhere posit squeezed or 'cyclic' dactyls equivalent in time to trochees, may therefore be presumptuous, given the apparently extraordinary isochronism of traditional Greek rhythm. The only isochronic construction I know of that might be a match in magnitude for the varieties of modern Greek folk dance would be the ancient form in strophe and antistrophe.

It may be objected that a simple ring dance (even if it resolved for some periods into rows) is too plain for lyric, not 'theatrical' enough for a dramatic chorus. Certainly there might have been differences between a participatory ring dance, or a ring centred on an altar or a sacred space, and a chorus projecting outwards and forwards to a theatre. The ancient 'crane' dance (γέρανος),[25] instituted on Delos by Theseus and perhaps to be identified with the modern *tsakonikos*,[26]

[24] Ulf Buchheld, personal communication, 2002.

[25] See Plutarch, *Life of Theseus*, 31.

[26] Dora Stratou, *The Greek Dances: Our Living Link With Antiquity*, Athens: Dora Stratou Dance Theatre, 1992, 14.

apparently presented an elaborate, serpentine pattern (παραλλάξεις καὶ ἀνελίξεις) in a particular rhythm (τινι ῥυθμῷ) as an imitation of the circuits and passages of the labyrinth (μίμημα τῶν ἐν τῷ Λαβυρίνθῳ περιόδων καὶ διεξόδων). The sense of 'strophe' could easily accommodate a twist or a weave; in which case, the period could perhaps have been a strand in a kind of braid.

As the lexicon notes, however, the κύκλιος χόρος or circular chorus was associated with the dithyramb;[27] and Aristotle traces the origins of tragedy to the *exarchons* of the dithyramb (*Poetics* 1449[a]10 ff.). Aristotle speaks in this passage only of a series of gradual changes in the development of tragedy out of the dithyramb, largely having to do with the introduction of actors and dialogue and with the metres used to render these new features. It is therefore very unlikely that there were radical changes in the form of the chorus, which was the archaic and original element. At any rate, Aristotle mentions no such changes in the chorus itself, except the lessening of its portion (or perhaps just its pride of place) in relation to the λόγος, and also what may be implied by the development of a certain magnitude in tragedy. The tragic poets' true innovation, as I see it, was to exploit the centre of the orchestral circle, made potent by the dance, as a stage for the dialogic re-enactment of myth. (The steep slope of the Greek theatre would seem to have been constructed precisely for the sake of viewing the action in this central space in the orchestral circle, not just over the heads of the audience but also over the heads of the chorus—together, of course, with viewing the whole circle of the chorus when it came time for them to dance in the round.)

In their entry, Liddell and Scott somewhat lamely contrast the circular chorus with a square chorus, citing a single fragment of the historian Timaeus that describes what appears to have been an occasional institution in Sparta. It is far more likely that circular choruses were so named to distinguish them not from squares but from more linear, processional choruses. (The structural distinction would not be between circles and lines as such, but rather between closed and open chains.) It appears that the procession and the round represent twin archetypes in the history of sacred folk dance across Europe:

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[27] H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. H. S. Jones, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968, 1006; s.v. κύκλιος.

the customs of the village festival gave rise to two types of dance. There was the processional dance of the band of worshippers in progress round their boundaries and from field to field, from house to house, from well to well of the village … The other type of folk-dance, the *ronde* or 'round', is derived from the comparatively stationary dance of the group of worshippers around the more especially sacred objects of the festival, such as the tree or the fire. The custom of dancing round the Maypole has been more or less preserved wherever the Maypole is known.[28]

The phallic song and dance, which was still current in many cities in Aristotle's time (*Poetics* 1449^{a}12–13)—perhaps also with the function of marking and consecrating the boundaries, farms, and water sources of the unwalled village (κώμη)—was the ancient Greek version of the processional type of village chorus. If Aristotle is right that the phallic κῶμος was the original of comedy, and the dithyramb of tragedy, it is reasonable to infer, for all that comedy seems later to have adopted them, that circular choruses were in fact essential to and distinctive of the tragic form, as the primitive element in its native development.

As for the theatricality of Greek round dances, done in costume, and projected towards an audience, it is demonstrated daily on Philopappou Hill in Athens at the Dora Stratou theatre. Once one has witnessed the modern performances of Greek folk dance—and borne in mind that these are not reconstructions, but idealizations of a living folk tradition—it is no longer difficult to imagine the spectacle and rhythmic pace of ancient tragedy. The movements of the chorus are *still* actual, continuing as they began, independent of epic and tragedy and the long liturgical centuries. The ancient dancers would have entered in a chain—usually, though not necessarily, in anapaests—rounding the rim of the orchestra, until they linked up in a circle and the strophe could begin. (In some of Sophocles' extant plays, such as the *Antigone*, this entering circuit is stepped in lyric metre and appears itself to be the first strophe.) They might have been led on, as today, by an improvising chorus-leader (χορηγός), who could have remained a focus of rhythmic and vocal attention through the ode. Aristotle alludes to the special excellence of such a

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[28] E. K. Chambers, in Francis Macdonald Cornford, *The Origin of Attic Comedy*, London: Edward Arnold, 1914, 48.

head dancer in relation to the excellence of his subordinate (*Politics* 1277ᵃ12). What has changed between then and now, apart from the evolution of the instruments, is that the modern dancers are accompanied by a separate band of singers and players; whereas in the ancient art it was primarily their own voices that accompanied them.

Strictly, however, it was the dancers who accompanied the word, not the word the dance. To read the lyric scores of Sophocles or Aeschylus critically today is almost never to gloss the word as so much rhythmic filler, subordinate to a visual or musical design, but to encounter the authority and the luminosity of the chosen word. As one remembers this primacy of the word in the poetics of ancient lyric, one is less inclined to imagine geometrically elaborate choreographic patterns which would have been likely to call attention to themselves. It was not the complexity of the circling which was marked, but the *rhythm* of the circling, given by the λόγος and expressed in the foot, which was unique to each lyric composition. Supported by rhythm, by gesture, by costume, it was the circling word that could invite epiphany.

E. EPIPHANY

Consider this little gem attributed to Sappho:

Δέδυκε μὲν ἀ σελέννα

καὶ Πληίαδες μέσαι δὲ

νύκτες, παρὰ δ' ἔρχετ' ὤρα

ἔγω δὲ μόνα κατεύδω

X—∪∪—∪—X

Lady the moon is set and gone
And the Seven Sisters, and Mid-
Night; passing by is the Hour's bloom,
And I? Alone, I fall asleep.

The verses have a poignancy that is not dependent on their beauty as χορεία. The community of the exclusively feminine subjects—Selanna the moon, the Pleiades, and the Midnight which have set, and the Hour of fruition passing by—a sorority which seems to link the speaker with the cosmos—makes a powerful contrast with her final solitude in sleep, as she lies down alone and unconsummated. The economy of expression and image is quietly breathtaking.

What can our three hypotheses do to awaken the music of these lines?

One syllable one step only says that there is an even number of steps, and the piece would have to begin and end on opposite feet. One wonders if an ode of this size would be stepped out at all. It is possible, however, that Πληίαδες was pronounced as a trisyllable. Such a pronunciation would eliminate the dactyl in the period; but there is manuscript evidence for the spelling Πλείαδες. The manuscripts also read μέσσαι in this line; the lengthened initial syllable here may have equalized in time what had been lost in step. Certainly this is the perceptible effect of reading both Πληίαδες as a trisyllable and μέσσαι as a spondee. On the basis of such a text, the ode would have an odd number of syllables, and could therefore begin and cadence on the right foot.

The centrality of the dactyl is manifest. As so often, and even on this small scale, the dactyl gives the line its initial impetus, which is brought to a cadence by means of an epitrite.

When we turn to the accentual determinants, an elegant pattern of disagreement and agreement is revealed. The first line introduces the rhythm: ∪ ‒́ ∪∪ — ∪ — ‒́, descending on the dactyl and ascending on a final bacchius. The masculine cadence is softened by the nasals in the name of the moon, and perhaps also by being stepped on the left foot. The first line's harmony reinforces the theses to establish the pattern, in response to which the following lines will first diverge and then return to agreement. The second line is an immediate variation, however one reads the text. As printed, it accents the arsis of the dactyl, and ends on a feminine cadence with short anceps: — — ∪́ ∪ — ∪ ‒́ ∪. On my reading, with the two changes suggested above, we see this pattern: — ‒́ ∪ — — ‒́ ∪, which appears to continue the epitrite motion of the cadence to the first line, rising in pitch on the Seven Sisters and falling on Midnight; the feminine cadence demands

an *enjambement*, to complete the sense as well as the epitrite, in the opening of the next line. The whole pattern would be: — ‿͞ ∪ — — ‿͞ ∪ | — ‿͞ .

The effect of the *enjambement* is striking. 'Middle' and 'night' straddle the break, which is also the mid-point of the poem. The effect is captured in this rhythm of the passing of the still point of midnight's zenith, which is only perceived as it disappears, like the bridge between line and line. The rest of the third line takes up with an anapaest the passage of the hour, cadencing on a bacchius: ∪∪‿͞ ∪—‿͞ ; the moment of bloom is gone as soon as it is felt to be present alongside, in the very utterance of παρὰ δ' ἔρχετ' ὥρα. On my reading, in the lilting spondaic contonation of ὥρα, we have the first right-foot barytonic cadence at period end.

The final line returns to the agreement with the ictus observed in the first line, in its chosen realizations of the ancipitia and its reinforcement of the theses, except that it stresses a third longum in the middle: ∪ ‿͞ ∪∪‿͞ ∪—‿͞ . Unlike in the first line, however, the arrangement of words serves to de-emphasize the dactyl—there has been an ἐπιπλοκή—and the scheme should show a continuance of the ascending rhythm begun in the close of the preceding line: we have in succession an iamb, an anapaest and a bacchius (∪‿͞ ∪∪‿͞ ∪—‿͞). This is a firm and vivid resolution. The total effect calls attention, however, to the new and central rhythmic stress on the word μόνα, whose meaning becomes the focus of a peculiarly choral power. On my reading this is a passing stress on the left foot—a bittersweet note that touches into life the aloneness on which both the poem's beauty and its sadness turns. The word is passing and at the same time emphatic: its rhythm forms the lonely axis of a setting cosmos.

It is not true that the speaker is anonymous. Her adjective, μόνα, is her epithet. She is the loneliest woman in all poetry.

Nagy points to a passage from Pindar's *Nemean* 6 as making an explicit reference to tradition, announcing that it refers to 'the tales of heroes told by Homer'. What is the relation of tradition to epiphany in performance?

> . . . καὶ ταῦτα μὲν παλαιότεροι
> ὁδὸν ἀμαξιτὸν εὗρον· ἕπομαι δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς ἔχων μελέταν·

τὸ δὲ πὰρ ποδὶ ναὸς ἑλισσόμενον αἰεὶ κυμάτων
λέγεται παντὶ μάλιστα δονεῖν
θυμόν. ἑκόντι δ᾽ ἐγὼ νώτῳ μεθέπων δίδυμον ἄχθος
ἄγγελος ἔβαν...   (53–7)

All these things are a highway [*amaxitos*] which the men of old time [*palaioteroi*] discovered, and I follow it also, with premeditation [*melete*]. But on a ship, they say, the wave that ever rolls nearest the keel [*to ... par podi*] most concerns every man's heart. Gladly have I taken on my back a twofold burden [*didumon akhthos*] and come as messenger [*angelos*]. (Nagy's translation)

Nagy then appends an interpretation, a kind of allegory, by W. H. Race:

The word *palaioteroi* refers primarily to the epic poets; the word *amaxitos* 'highway' points to the expansiveness and, in both senses, popularity of epic; the word *melete* 'premeditation' refers to his own craft or training ground; *to ... par podi* '[the wave] nearest the keel' represents the here and now of the epinician occasion in opposition to the heroic past; the *didumon akhthos* 'twofold burden' is the double duty of praising the victor and praising the community at large; and the word *angelos* refers to his own role as lyric 'messenger'.[29]

This is all well and good; note, however, that despite Nagy's introduction, Pindar nowhere in the poem refers to Homer, or to events depicted in either the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. So then who might these older ones be, the παλαιότεροι?

It is striking how Nagy's and Race's dictional analyses can mask significations that would have been concrete and evident in performance. The sense of the rhythm and motion of the words can indeed be the primary discloser of meaning, in particular when rhythmic motion calls attention to words that are de-emphasized in the purely dictional transaction with the poem that results in such a translation. Consider 'the wave that ever rolls nearest the keel', τὸ δὲ πὰρ ποδὶ ναὸς ἑλισσόμενον αἰεὶ κυμάτων. Race is right to point to the 'here and now of the epinician occasion'; but consider how concrete is this embodiment in the notion of the 'foot', ποδὶ, translated 'keel'. In the dancers' motion as in the rhythm of the line there is an anapaestic

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[29] Nagy, *Pindar's Homer*, 15–16.

run (τὸ δὲ πὰρ ποδὶ ναὸς ἑλισσόμεν–) that trips on a final short (–ον) before being reined in by the undulations of the waves, αἰεὶ κυμάτων, long-long-long-short-long. Imagine this motion flowing like a current through the dancer's body, an undulation in the gesture atop the steering of the foot, which, to reverse the metaphor, is the dancer's keel.

The verbs for foot motion in Greek lyric poetry are often emphatic musically, but rarely find a place in translation; whereas epiphany through the foot is both a possibility and a goal of actual lyric performance. Consider, for example, the responsion in the opening chorus of Sophocles' *Antigone*, between ἐφάνθης, referring to the epiphany of a new dawn after war, and ἔβα, 'he stepped' (opening the third periods of the strophe and antistrophe). Translation cannot capture either the concreteness or the vividness of this appearance and this forward step, which is all one with the epiphany and the step of the chorus itself into the drama. In the Pindar poem, in ἄγγελος ἔβαν, '[as] a messenger I stepped', all the interpreter's interest is in the messenger, the dactylic ἄγγελος, but the musical goal of the phrase is in the masculine iambic cadence of ἔβαν, the stepping forward in the first person of an embodied meaning. The aesthetic unity of χορεία in speech, gesture, and step (λόγος σχῆμα πούς) is often achieved in this rather simple way, by having a chorus tell you who they are and say what they are doing in the rhythm of doing it.

As the pressure of the foot upon the ground impresses the ground, to create tracks that can be followed, so also an ὁδὸν ἀμαξιτὸν, translated 'highway', is in fact a 'wagon rut', created by use. This is what the older ones, whom Race identifies with 'epic poets', have 'discovered': a pathway made by use, by the pressure of dancers' feet upon the ground. But considering the literal imprint of the feet upon the ground, at the performance space in Nemea, perhaps it is more likely that the wagon-rut is a lyric wagon-rut, than an epic one: Pindar is impressed by the lasting impression of generations of choral odes that must have been composed for and performed in the same choral space, even for the same family, whose successful athletes in this case tended to skip a generation. Earlier in the poem, at the first epode, this imagery had been explicit, when the current victor Alcimidas is said to plant his own foot (ἑὸν πόδα) in the tracks (ἴχνεσιν) of his own-blooded grandfather (πατροπάτορος ὁμαιμίου, 15–16).

Of course the dancers are not simply saying these things, they are embodying this stepping in the tracks of others, and in two ways worth distinguishing. Each dancer in the round literally steps in the tracks of his mate as he proceeds in the closed circle: the practice of choral circle-dancing is, among other things, a disciplining and socializing endeavour. But across generations this victor's chorus is dancing in the same space and perhaps in the literal tread-marks of ancestral dancers. In the preparation for an epic dance, accompanying Demodocus in the *Odyssey*'s Phaeacia, the makeshift dancing floor is smoothed out. Hence the Phaeacian performance makes a 'new impression'. But perhaps at places like Nemea the dancing ground around a sacred centre was not smoothed out at each event, in which case there would have been a literal sense in which today's chorus danced in the steps of their ancestors, along grooves and footpaths that were created by use. In either case: there was both a synchronic and a diachronic sense to this notion in Pindar of stepping in the footsteps of others. In *Nemean* 6 the tradition *is* the epiphany at the foot, and the epiphany the tradition.

Finally consider Pindar's *Pythian* 12, his tribute to Midas the flautist. It is a small-scale piece of four strophes, composed in standard dactylo-epitrite; but it is sufficiently complex to be illustrative and demonstrative of the utility of an analytic approach to longer works in terms of the elements of $\chi o \rho \epsilon \acute{\iota} a$ described by Plato. The musical analysis of modern poetry does not require an apology:

Music in poetry synthesizes the sounds of a language in terms of aesthetic values, both technical and emotional, both universal and language-specific, to create an effect that is analogous and adaptable to literal music.[30]

The interpretation of ancient practices, however, and the poetry of dead languages, must involve some doubt and controversy. In the twentieth century, two and three generations of classicists with little or no ancient testimony to back them made a foundational premise out of a theory, an instant academic tradition out of oral tradition. This story counsels caution, for all that choral theory makes testable predictions, and is based on historical and empirical evidence. What ought to be beyond dispute, in a conspectus of my argument, is that

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[30] Paul Friedrich, *Music in Russian Poetry*, New York: Peter Lang, 1998, 18.

(1) the prosody discovered by Sidney Allen for Greek is real, and that an investigation into its cognate relationship to the prosodies of Latin and classical Sanskrit is called for; (2) that it is directly related to the received (written) prosody; (3) that the musical substance of Greek words creates effects in Greek poetry, such as cyclic recurrence and repetition, that are now normally associated with non-verbal music; (4) that Greek metre cannot be studied, cannot even be constructed, without accentual determinants; and (5) that the physical aspects of dance are significant creative factors in the final expression of Greek verse.

Counting one step to a syllable, the total number of steps in *Pythian* 12 is even, but in each strophe it is odd. The first word of the poem, αἰτέω, can be a trisyllable, however; this would make the total step count odd, and insure a passage in the dance from beginning to end of right foot to right foot. Examination reveals that there would often be an alternation from period to period of the foot of the final cadence, and an alternation also in the final cadences of successive strophes.

I have found it useful to draw up the traditional metrical scheme and overlay it with the positions of the prominently accented syllables. Care must be taken here to remember, however, that such traditional schemes print a longum, in accordance with the standard conception of strophic response, where in reality there is anceps and the accent is decisive. The sixth periods of the first two strophes, for example, end with accentual dactyls (τάν ποτε, ἔμπεδον), while the second two with cretics (or iambs—θνατοῖς ἔχειν, ἔσται χρόνος). The usual printed scheme just says 'E'. In this scheme we do not distinguish between oxytonic and barytonic reinforcement, as in the earlier epic charts; rather, each number refers to the strophe in which the accent occurs, whether that prominence is an oxytone or a barytone. Recall that there is only one prominence per word. φιλάγλαε, in line 1, is oxytone on the antepenult at the fifth syllable of the first strophe; hence a '1' appears there in the chart. At the corresponding point of the second strophe we have παρθενίοις. While there is an acute on the penult here, according to the new theory it is the ultima that is prominent (a barytone). This ultima lands on the fifth syllable. Hence a '2', for the second strophe, appears at this spot as well. The responding fifth syllables of these strophes are

both prominently stressed in relation to the neighbouring syllables, but the nature of the prominence is different. There is another barytone in the fifth syllable of the third strophe, but no accentual prominence at this point in the fourth strophe; hence a '3' also appears in the same column, but *not* a '4'.

Pindar's *Pythian* 12

Αἰτέω σε, φιλάγλαε, καλλίστα βροτεᾶν πολίων,   Str. 1
Φερσεφόνας ἕδος, ἅ τ᾽ ὄχθαις ἔπι μηλοβότου
ναίεις Ἀκράγαντος ἐΰδματον κολώναν, ὦ ἄνα,
ἵλαος ἀθανάτων ἀνδρῶν τε σὺν εὐμενίᾳ
δέξαι στεφάνωμα τόδ᾽ ἐκ Πυθῶνος εὐδόξῳ Μίδᾳ,
αὐτόν τέ νιν Ἑλλάδα νικάσαντα τέχνᾳ, τάν ποτε
Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε θρασειᾶν Γοργόνων
οὔλιον θρῆνον διαπλέξαις Ἀθάνα·

τὸν παρθενίοις ὑπό τ᾽ ἀπλάτοις ὀφίων κεφαλαῖς   Str. 2
ἄϊε λειβόμενον δυσπενθέϊ σὺν καμάτῳ,
Περσεὺς ὁπότε τρίτον ἄνυσσεν κασιγνητᾶν μέρος,
εἰναλίᾳ τε Σερίφῳ λαοῖσί τε μοῖραν ἄγων.
ἤτοι τό τε θεσπέσιον Φόρκοιο μαύρωσεν γένος,
λυγρόν τ᾽ ἔρανον Πολυδέκτᾳ θῆκε ματρός τ᾽ ἔμπεδον
δουλοσύναν τό τ᾽ ἀναγκαῖον λέχος,
εὐπαράου κρᾶτα συλάσαις Μεδοίσας

υἱὸς Δανάας· τὸν ἀπὸ χρυσοῦ φαμὲν αὐτορύτου   Str. 3
ἔμμεναι. ἀλλ᾽ ἐπεὶ ἐκ τούτων φίλον ἄνδρα πόνων
ἐρρύσατο, παρθένος αὐλῶν τεῦχε πάμφωνον μέλος,
ὄφρα τὸν Εὐρυάλας ἐκ καρπαλιμᾶν γενύων
χριμφθέντα σὺν ἔντεσι μιμήσαιτ᾽ ἐρικλάγκταν γόον.
εὗρεν θεός· ἀλλά νιν εὑροῖσ᾽ ἀνδράσι θνατοῖς ἔχειν,
ὠνόμασεν κεφαλᾶν πολλᾶν νόμον,
εὐκλεᾶ λαοσσόων μναστῆρ᾽ ἀγώνων,

λεπτοῦ διανισσόμενον χαλκοῦ θαμὰ καὶ δονάκων,   Str. 4
τοὶ παρὰ καλλιχόρῳ ναίοισι πόλει Χαρίτων.
Καφισίδος ἐν τεμένει, πιστοὶ χορευτᾶν μάρτυρες.
εἰ δέ τις ὄλβος ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν, ἄνευ καμάτου
οὐ φαίνεται· ἐκ δὲ τελευτάσει νιν ἤτοι σάμερον
δαίμων τὸ δὲ μόρσιμον οὐ παρφυκτόν, ἀλλ᾽ ἔσται χρόνος
οὗτος, ὃ καί τιν᾽ ἀελπτίᾳ βαλὼν
ἔμπαλιν γνώμας τὸ μὲν δώσει, τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω.
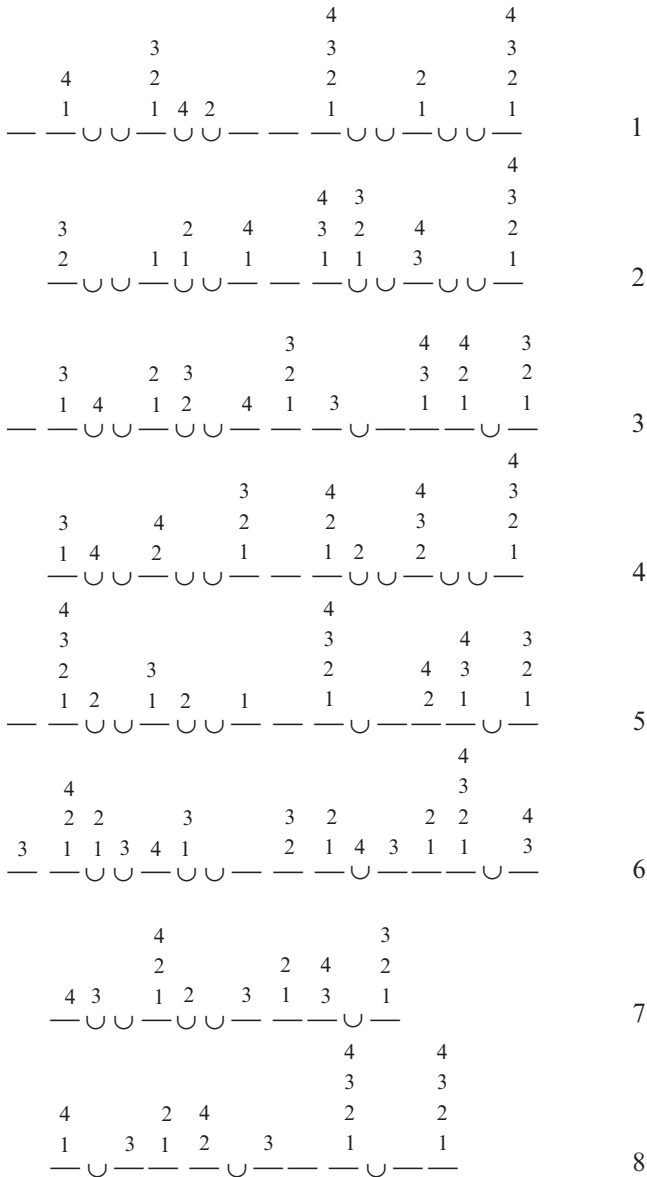
Figure 8.2 Metrical scheme of Pindar, *Pythian* 12, overlaid with positions of prominently stressed syllables

It should be clear from Figure 8.2 that the accents are not randomly arranged. Nearly every period has its final syllable stressed (twenty-seven times out of thirty-two), while earlier portions of the line exhibit various degrees of flexibility. This is the sustained variety of musical disagreement, moving towards agreement.

In the final period, all the stanzas stress not only the final syllable but also the syllable fourth from the end. In all cases, *both* of these terminal reinforcements of the strophes are barytonic. As we saw in the case of the final periods of the strophic stanzas of *Olympian* 1, there is a larger scale to the sense of agreement at the end of a complete strophe, and the motion from disagreement to agreement apparent here at the level of the individual period is organically subservient to this larger movement of the strophe. There is no linguistic reason why the fourth syllable from the end should particularly receive a stress. The accent determines the ictus; the poet has made a conscious harmonic choice as to what sort of accentual pattern will provide the characteristic resolution in the strophic procession of the poem. In the first three stanzas, this final resolution involves a word of bacchius shape (e.g. ἀγώνων); in the terminal strophe, there is no such word (τὸ δ᾽ οὔπω), but the accentual pattern is still maintained.

There appears also to be a tendency to stress the initial longum of a hemiepes (twenty-six times, in forty opportunities); in this way the period tends to bring into relief the modulation from descending to ascending. Again we see this relation on a broader scale at the level of the strophe. Whereas the first seven periods are either entirely dactylic (in the sense of closed hemiepē) or dactylic moving into epitrite, the whole of the final period is in epitrites.

Meanwhile, there are numbers of long quantities which remain unstressed (or contain only the rise in the contonation) through all four strophes. Neither is the avoidance of stress a random phenomenon. The majority of the unstressed long syllables are anacruses or 'up-beats', initial syllables before the first dactyl in the period, or transitional syllables between two rhythmic groupings. When one of these transitional steps *is* stressed in the middle of the third period, it appears to signal a change in the rhythm, and the first epitrites are introduced. Again, there is no linguistic reason why these longs should be unsuitable for the placement of the down-glide. Longs in

certain positions are never stressed in the course of four circuits, while longs in other positions are stressed every time. We see evidence of conscious choices on the poet's part that create a distinctive harmonic pattern; this pattern is recognizable in terms of Plato's descriptions of the characteristic music of χορεία. Here is more evidence in lyric to complement the evidence I have given in epic that the new theory of the accent lays hold of the very truth.

One of the stressed anacruses is particularly arresting. The sixth period of the third strophe begins with the stark sentence, εὗρεν θεός. This disjoints the rhythm severely. The up-beat is circumflected, while the thesis of the initial dactyl is left blank; and the *second* short of the dactyl, normally the least prominent and most dependent part of the foot, is given an emphatic released oxytone stress. A glance at the scheme shows that the rhythm of the third strophe takes some time to recover, remaining out of step with the other stanzas until the cadence of the seventh period, and in some measure until the final cadences of the strophe.

This phrase in the twenty-second line of the poem appears to close the ring opened in the seventh, with Παλλὰς ἐφεῦρε. Pindar has traced the significance of the victory of Midas of Acragas with the αὐλός ('reed pipe') at Delphi back to the flute's mythical origins, to the moment where Athena herself invented the instrument and the 'many-headed tune'. εὗρεν θεός marks in the timeless aorist the very moment of discovery and epiphany, from which the chorus returns in the final strophe to the exigencies of the present. At the corresponding moment of epiphany in the narrative of *Olympian* 1, as the god himself appears before the hero (line 74, antistrophe Γ)—at his foot!—we find a period which contrasts with all seven other responding periods in allowing only one full contonation: πὰρ ποδὶ σχεδὸν φάνη. The barytonic culmination on φάνη ('he appeared', 'he became manifest'), following a series of repressed oxytones, is a slight touch in comparison with the rhythmic daring of εὗρεν θεός, but it is obviously felt nonetheless. There is, *through* the word performed, in its own rhythmic and harmonic substance, as in its dynamic relation to the choral train, an embodiment of meaning in the moment of manifestation and discovery.

At the heart of Pindar's poetry the moments of divine epiphany, long recognized in Pindaric commentary, are here revealed to be

musical phenomena, concretized in living dance. The experience of epiphany $\pi\grave{\alpha}\rho$ $\pi o\delta\acute{\iota}$, 'at the foot', is the ultimate aim of the art of $\chi o\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\alpha$ and its summoning circles, whether in its epic or its lyric forms. The promise of such moments, actuated in harmony and rhythm, can now be a reward for the labours of learning Greek. Who can tell what powers these poems still harbour, what epiphanies are yet to strike in bloom, as the music of an ancient world becomes vivid once again?

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